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JULIA SEVERA;

OR THE

Year Four Hundred and Ninety-two.

VOL. I.

JULIA SEVERA;

OR THE

Year Four Hundred and Ninety-two;

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

J. C. L. SIMONDE DE SISMONDI,

**AUTHOR OF NEW PRINCIPLES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY;
THE HISTORY OF FRANCE, THE ITALIAN REPUBLICS OF
THE MIDDLE AGE, THE LITERATURE OF THE SOUTH OF
EUROPE, &c.**

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



OXFORD,

**PRINTED AND SOLD BY MUNDAY AND SLATTER;
SOLD ALSO BY G. AND W. B. WHITTAKER,
AVE-MARIA-LANE, LONDON.**

1822.



ADVERTISEMENT.

IN giving an English dress to the novel of M. SIMONDE DE SISMONDI, the translator has endeavoured to render accurately the author's meaning, without avoiding, through idle ignorance, apparent difficulties; or, through an affectation of elegance, foisting in ideas that do not exist in the original. It must, however, be observed that, from the gross typographical errors which disgrace the French work, many of the paragraphs are rendered nearly unintelligible, a circumstance much be-

wailed, and in some measure accounted for by the author, in a note prefixed to a long list of the most formidable errata.

Oxford, April 16th, 1822.

PREFACE.

IT is with considerable diffidence I lay before the public a work which can fulfil the object I had in view when I composed it, so far only as the author may unite in himself talents to which I cannot pretend, talents which, at my age, after a life spent in serious study, are rarely preserved. It is a novel, and I could wish it were fully entitled to that name, by the accuracy and interest of the pictures of domestic life it professes to draw. Interest, however, can with difficulty be carried back thirteen centuries; when placed at a period so imperfectly known, the pictures of common life must ever be wanting either

in truth or in animation ; characters are lost in the shade, when, instead of developing their sentiments, the writer seeks to describe places, times, and public manners.

It must be observed that these inconveniences are attached to the object I had in view, namely, to describe the state of nations, the relation between the inhabitants, the ruling opinions and domestic habits of Gaul, at the different periods of its history. Endeavouring, in a work of a more serious nature, to shew in a clearer light than hitherto has been done, the concatenation of public events, the great historical personages, the victories and the disasters, the virtues and crimes of the various races and kings of France ; I should like, at every great revolution to give to my readers an image of private life also, painted on an imaginary can-

vass, filled by fictitious portraits, still guided, however, by historical research, and following the cōtemporāry writers with scrupulous nicety in my sketches of opinions and of national characters.

The novel which I now present to the public is intended to describe the state of Gaul at the time of the invasion of Clovis. It is the fruit of the researches and labours which I consecrated to the compiling of the early volumes of the History of France. The historian is, as it were, obliged to live in the age he describes ; such continued labour cannot be expected in the mere novelist. Had I been actuated by no other motive than that of writing the year FOUR HUNDRED AND NINETY-TWO, I should certainly not have taken the trouble of reading Gregory of Tours three successive times ; neither should I have worn myself

pale, poring over all the codes of laws, over all the chronicles, over all the Lives of the Saints of that period. The historian is the only person who has the opportunity of acquiring such a knowledge of ancient times, as can enable him to place the scene of a novel at an early date, with strict attention to the manners of the age. These manners and opinions, such as I have represented them, a candid antiquary must acknowledge to have belonged to that period. In my portraits of characters I disclaim all intention of painting in odious colours one order of society rather than another; of exalting or debasing any system of religion or politics. I wish to describe the ancient state of society such as it was, at least such as we must conceive it was, with all its virtues and vices. I do not require the reader to deduce any certain con-

clusions from that state, I seek only to present it to his view.

The mottoes I have prefixed to each chapter, after the example of the author of those admirable Scotch novels, to which I could wish mine were more nearly assimilated, are all extracted from cōtemporary authors ; these are intended to show how far the imaginary scenes I have presented agree with the real events of that age.

The principal characters of the novel, Felix, Julia, and Severus, are entirely fictitious ; the action of Volusianus, on which the whole plot, as it were, hinges, and the expedition of Theodoric, are also imaginary. They are things that may have happened, but we are not certain they actually did. The other public events are, for the most part, grounded on history. I am not aware of having deviated from

chronological order, excepting so far as regards St. Senoch, whose retirement to the tower of Loches was, perhaps, half a century posterior to the period in which I have supposed it to take place.

JULIA SEVERA;

OR THE

Near Four Hundred and Ninety-two.

CHAP. I.

THE FAMILY ESTATE OF A SENATOR OF GAUL AT
THE END OF THE FIFTH CENTURY.

“ And he gave him, in this very forest, land twelve leagues
“ in breadth, and as many in length, promising that neither
“ he nor any of his successors should ever dispute his right
“ to its possession.”—*Vita Sancti Sigeberti, Austrasiæ Regis*,
cap. v. p. 601.

UNDER the consulship of Anastasius and Rufus, in the year of Rome 1245, or of the Christian era 492, Felix Florentius, a rich lord of Gaul, returning from a journey to Constantinople, came to take possession of a vast estate which the virtuous Emperor Majorian, his mother's uncle, had presented to his family during

his short but glorious reign. The estate of a private individual, in those days, extended over a whole province, and that of Felix Florentius, situate on the left border of the Loire, between that river and the Cher, comprised a large tract of fertile land; but its ancient population had wholly disappeared: its inhabitants had all perished, either through misery, the consequence of universal oppression, or by the sword of the barbarians. Majorian, in giving this desert district to his relation Sylvia Numantia, Felix's mother, had insisted that she should re-people it with cultivators.

The house, abandoned by one of its former possessors, had been, by Sylvia's orders, repaired and enlarged in order that it might become the residence of new masters; this mansion was erected on a height which commanded a view of the windings of the Loire. The Vandals in their last inroad had set fire to it, but the progress of the flames had been stopped ere they had done much mischief, and all marks of the destructive element had been carefully removed. Her house, or villa, known in the country by the name of Noviliacum, and which in these days we should call a castle, was very roomy and convenient: as yet private individuals had not directed their attention to the fortification

of their dwellings. The walls of this mansion were not flanked by towers. They were of moderate thickness, and the flat roofs which covered not only the principal habitation, but also the humble dwellings destined for the slaves, were not fortified with battlements. Although of small extent, they were open to those who chose to walk on them, and they commanded the most rich and varied landscapes. The distribution and decoration of the apartments had been directed by the best artists of Greece and Rome : indeed so much taste was displayed that Noviliacum might be deemed an edifice worthy of the Augustan age ; whereas for many miles around not a single habitation was to be found that did not bear the marks of the ravages of the Vandals, the Suevi, the Silingi, or the Huns.

The enchanting gardens, the parks, and the orchards of Noviliacum, were once more enriched by the toil of man ; the fruit-trees, which for ten long years had seen their fruits wither and drop unprofitably from their branches, without a living hand to pluck them, recovered a new vigour when they received from the gardeners of Sylvia the cultivation which had for so long a time been suspended ; young plantations were added to the old ones, to perfect the plans of the original holder. Still in wandering

over these gardens one could not help observing that the generations of plants, like those of men, had been interrupted. All the trees which require culture, were either of ancient date or newly planted, for the proprietor had not for a long time paid any attention to the estate. Even before his final ruin, he had for many years pined in misery, surrounded by the riches of nature; he had long destroyed the work of his forefathers without the power of repairing any part of it; and it was not until he had suffered much and caused much to be suffered, that he perished under the weight of calamities which the folly and the vices of the Emperors inflicted upon Gaul.

On quitting the gardens of Noviliacum, nature in all her wildness was seen to resume her empire over the fields which in days of yore had been enriched by the industry of man. Forests had invaded all the heights; they extended from the mountains athwart slopes which in happier times had been covered with fertile vineyards. The lowest plains which, when the Gauls enjoyed the blessings of peace and opulence, had been carefully levelled and converted into rich meads, irrigated by far-fetched waters, were now covered with rushes, fostered in stagnant marshes. In the more elevated plains, the

marks of the ploughshare were yet to be seen ; but now the heaths and brushwood displayed in turns their red and yellow blossoms, while among the brambles some flocks grazed the scanty herbage which had taken the place of the former luxuriant harvests.

Sylvia, however, had fulfilled the conditions to which the illustrious Majorian had attached the possession of this vast territory ; she had endeavoured to repeople these wilds, and to furnish the means of livelihood to the industrious inhabitants that she introduced. But the whole country, known then by the name of *Interamnes*, which spread from the Loire to the Cher, from the solitudes of Sologne to the environs of Tours, was comprised in her estate. This small province extended from north to south four or five leagues, and eight or ten from east to west : in the days when Gaul was free it had been known to array more than six thousand soldiers ; yet all the efforts of one of the richest families in the empire had hardly been able to bring back six hundred families of cultivators. To repeople this territory Sylvia had disposed of her possessions scattered over Gaul. She had sold a palace which she possessed in Arles ; she had taken from the hands of the merchants the funds which they employed for her at

Treves : these two capitals, one the metropolis of the seventeen provinces, the other of the prefecture of the Gauls, were the two cities of the west which still possessed the most money ; but in these times of universal distress, Sylvia could not realize her fortune without making enormous sacrifices.

In consequence of this distress new cultivators were easily procured for the land ; they were then to be bought in the mart as we now buy cattle, and it was from the Visigoths, lords of Aquitaine at this time, that she purchased three hundred slaves. Many of them were unfortunate Gauls, who having been forced from their hearths by the barbarians, returned to dig anew with enshackled hands, the soil of their native country. Sylvia, more humane and at the same time more prudent than most of the Roman proprietors of land, had replaced all those of her captives who were of Gaulish race, nearly in the condition of their ancestors ; she destined them to cultivate lands, the crops of which she divided with them.

Others of her slaves were Germans, captured in warfare. The Visigoths and the Vandals, the Franks, the Germans, and the Burgundians, had more than once turned their arms against each other : after their combats the Roman slave-

merchants were wont to purchase the captives whom they had permitted to live, in order to sell them to the holders of land; but these captives, contemning the Romans, whom they were forced to obey, shuddered at serving where their companions in arms commanded as masters; they ever sought the means of escape, they threatened, they yielded to bursts of fury, and were restrained only by the fear of suffering the most cruel punishment, by manacles which they constantly wore, or by dungeons, named *Ergastula*, in which they were immured every evening.

Sylvia had also procured slaves of Scythian race, who forty years before had, following Attila, overrun Gaul. These, incapable of submitting to rural toils, had recommenced in the wilds of Sologne the wandering life to which they were accustomed in the deserts of Northern Asia. To them Sylvia entrusted the care of her numerous flocks; they followed them on horseback amid the forests, armed with lances; with equal courage they defended them against wolves and robbers; twice each year they returned a faithful account of their charge; and as they never entered a house, nor tasted the sweets of civilized life, having as it were no communion

with man, they fancied themselves still free, and were happy in their servitude.

Certain oppressive laws were enforced which did not allow the landholder who treated his peasants with humanity, to receive on his estates the fugitives who, crushed by the cruelty of their masters, or harassed by the severity of the fiscal officer, (*villicus*) wished to abandon their cabins, their fields, all their little property, to rescue at least their persons from torture. According to a law of Honorius, the husbandmen who, however, were not slaves, might be reclaimed by their first masters, and without the formalities of justice might be forced from those who sheltered them. Sylvia, nevertheless, had taken advantage of the universal anarchy to receive a large number of wandering families, who, without her assistance, must have perished in the forests. These were ancient Gauls, who spake the Celtic tongue; they wore long straight hair, sleeved tunics, and wide trowsers, a dress used even in the time of Cæsar. They were patient, industrious, faithful: but four ages of oppression had destroyed that energy and vigour of mind which their forefathers possessed; nay, the very recollection even of their former liberty.

Lastly, two small military colonies completed

Sylvia's establishment in the district of *Inter-amnes*, and they watched for the safety of the whole territory. These consisted of veterans to whom the latter emperors had promised lands; but to whom no money had been given to build houses, or enable them to obtain herds of cattle and instruments of tilth, without which this pretended generosity of princes was entirely useless. But the senator Fulvius Florentius, the father of Felix, had supplied what the state could not give. He established a *maniple*, or a company of aged soldiers, at the pass of the Loire, and another at the frith of the Cher.

The first of these companies was composed of ancient legionaries, enrolled in the various provinces of the Roman empire. Therein were seen united, Italians, Greeks, Illyrians, Moors, and Britons, who, having for a long time fought under the same banners, knew no country but their camp. Their wives, who had followed them to the army, like them were hardened to toil, and fearless of danger. Fast approaching towards old age, having no longer vigour to support the hardships of warfare, they had hoped yet to bear the toils of agriculture; in truth their arms had not lost their strength, and when they began some new work, they were enabled by their ardour to leave far behind

them the peasants who shared the task. But neither was perseverance nor patience to be reckoned amongst the virtues to which the soldier's life had formed them. Their village was known by the name of the legionaries' camp; its houses were larger, more convenient and tasty than those of the other cultivators; but when the spectator approached them, he might quickly discover many marks of the indolence and negligence of the inmates.

Five or six leagues distant the senator Florentius had built on the margin of the Cher, the camp of the federates. Federate was a name given in the latter years of the empire to the barbarians who, without abandoning their language, their arms, or their native leaders, served under the Roman eagles. In their ranks were seen Ostrogoths and Visigoths, Burgundians, Franks and Vandals: they had almost all borne arms against the empire ere they enlisted in the pay of the emperors. They had successively crowned and afterwards dethroned many of the later monarchs of the west. They had finally given the crown of Italy to Odoacer, and in return had exacted from him ample gifts of land. Wherever these veteran barbarians had settled to enjoy repose, they wished in their adopted country to retrace an image of the forests of

Germany, whence they originally sprang. Never were their houses contiguous; no bar, no wall, forbade approach; towns and forts appeared to the Germans so many prisons, which, without renouncing liberty, they could not inhabit. For this reason the senator Florentius, who wished to give his military colonies some means of defence, although he fortified the camp of the legionaries, contented himself with placing that of the federates on a rugged spot which owed its strength to nature alone.

Sylvia Numantia had by long labour, perseverance, and prudence, created these various settlements which in this desert province seemed a new colony. Her husband and her son had been enabled to sojourn on this estate only at short and distant intervals. The former, the senator Fulvius Florentius, had been called to Rome at the commencement of Majorian's reign. This virtuous Emperor, who with justice might be called the last of the Romans, employed by turns Florentius in the cabinet and in the field; the cause of his country was to him a sacred cause; and after he was assassinated, Florentius continued to defend Roman independence, never ceasing to bear arms for Rome, reckless of the monarch in whose name the orders were given. Eighteen years had now elapsed since he fol-

lowed the Emperor Julius Nepos into Dalmatia, when, foreseeing the fall of the empire, which happened two years after, he sent into Gaul his wife, and his only son, then eight years of age, while he hastened to Constantinople to entreat the Emperor Zeno to undertake the defence of the west.

A grammarian and a priest had been chosen by the senator Florentius to accompany Sylvia in her retirement on the banks of the Loire, and to tend with her the education of the son who had been born to them in an advanced age, and on whom were grounded the hopes of the family. The senator followed the example of all great families in taking such masters to initiate his son in the study of sacred and profane literature; but he made Sylvia promise that she would not leave to them the care of finishing his education.

He recommended her to take at an early age his child Felix to some large town. "It is
" communion with his equals," said he to her,
" that forms man, and from Orleans to Tours
" Felix would see none but inferiors or artful
" slaves. Where at Noviliacum would be the
" man that durst look him face to face, who
" would venture to support an opinion differing
" from his, who would oppose him, or hint a doubt

“of his talents and importance? Would
“he there need the art of persuasion, where
“all must obey his nod? Would he find
“it necessary to act properly when no one
“would have the courage to prove him in the
“wrong? Well I know the vices and corrup-
“tion of cities; but can they be compared to
“the corruption that slavery engenders? I know
“that he must find in capitals intriguers, para-
“sites, ready to favour his evil inclinations;
“women divested of modesty, who will offer to
“him all the temptations of vice; but will he
“not find flatterers, intriguers, women prone to
“seduce, if he be surrounded with slaves only?
“Nay, will there be found one who shall not
“watch in his youthful master the first mark of
“a sensual propensity to change it to a passion?
“the first trace of intellectual weakness to turn
“it to a vice? Are we not in the bosom of our
“families surrounded by as many seducers, as
“many corrupters of innocence, even as the
“effeminate princes of Asia? Would not a
“youthful master educated to virtue amidst
“slaves, be a phenomenon as wondrous as the
“son of a despot possessed of a pure heart and
“a feeling soul? Miserable wretches are we,
“miserable are the times in which we live, when
“a free population has disappeared from the

“face of the earth! Hapless are our days,
“when the lord of Noviliacum must travel ten
“long leagues ere he meet his equal! These
“are the evils which shake the Roman empire—
“not the discord between Glycerius and Ne-
“pos;—not the arrogant ambition of the pa-
“trician Orestes;—no, it is because true Italians
“are no longer found in Italy, nor true Gauls
“in Gaul, that our armies can no longer de-
“fend us, and that the federates read us the
“law.”

Following these injunctions, Sylvia, as soon as Felix had completed his thirteenth year, took him from Noviliacum, which until then she had inhabited alternately with the neighbouring towns of Tours and Orleans, to Arles, regarded as the capital of Roman Gaul even after the fall of the empire of the west, and where many of the greatest lords of the province assembled. In the society of the Roman nobles he was to learn elegance of manners and the politeness that becomes a public character. By the example of many of these lords he might also learn politics and eloquence; but a taste for the arts of war, as well as for those acquirements of the body and mind which belong to a more active life, could not be gained in such a society. Sylvia, therefore, as soon as her son could grasp

the sword, wished him to acquire among the barbarians, that consciousness of dignity and vigour, which an effeminate education had destroyed amongst the juvenile Romans. She presented him to Uric, king of the Visigoths, whose residence was at Toulouse; she next presented him to Gondebaud, king of the Burgundians, whose capital was Vienne in Dauphiné.

The Romans contemned and hated the barbarians; but they feared them: the senators of Gaul, (and this name was given to all who by their patronage and their riches might have been worthy to enter the senate of the last emperors,) thought themselves at least the equals of the kings of those conquering tribes, whom they had often seen to accept with eagerness the Roman honours; they did not even lose the hope of being one day their commanders, when the eagle of the empire, which in their opinion now slumbered only, would once more unfold his pinions. But better than any courtiers did they know the submission due to superior strength; four centuries of thralldom had developed in them all the arts of flattery, and the most haughty of the Gauls could crouch, cringe, and fawn before those fierce conquerors, not one of whom was untinged with the blood of his brothers or nearest relatives.

Felix Florentius was not endowed with this supple character when he presented himself at the courts of Toulouse and Vienne; his natural courage had been developed by the exercises of youth and the encounter of peril; he knew better than his countrymen what constituted bravery, to which he gave its just value. The victories of Uric, who had subjected to the Visigoths nearly the whole of Aquitaine, did not dazzle him so much as to prevent his seeing in the conqueror the assassin of his brother Theodoric; and Gondebaud, notwithstanding his brilliant valour, ever appeared to him the murderer of Chilperic his brother, and of his wife and children. Felix, in the camp or in the court of the barbarians, was respected as a man who, like themselves, was a soldier, and who, more than they could boast of, was also a citizen.

Felix Florentius had acquired in the schools, in the assemblies of the Roman Lords, in the courts of the barbarian kings, as much knowledge both of men and business, as was compatible with a virtuous and a noble mind. His features, although not beautiful, yet prepossessed all in his favour. In his twenty-sixth year, the time at which our narration begins, he appeared older than he was; there was something grave

in his countenance, slow and deliberate in his demeanour, which marked that he had lived with Roman senators; but the strength of his broad shoulders, the just proportion of his height, somewhat below the middle stature, his firm step, shewed that he had shared the exercises of the barbarians. His dark eyes, rolling and sparkling, animated a countenance rather pale, and impressed on his physiognomy characters varying according to the feelings that ruled his soul.

That same year Felix had been called into the east by the death of his father, which happened at Constantinople soon after the coronation of the Emperor Anastasius. On his return he had traversed Italy, the sovereignty of which was at that time disputed with Odoacer, by the great Theodoric and the bold Ostrogoths under his command. That part of Gaul, which had not yet been invaded by the barbarians, nominally obeyed the emperors of the east. It still recognized that Roman empire whose sovereign resided at Constantinople, but no fostering or protecting authority existed in the government. Hence Felix Florentius, as soon as he returned into Gaul, hastened to Noviliacum. He thought that in a country abandoned to anarchy, in which the laws were without

strength, in which social authority was no where felt, it was the duty of the large landholders to undertake the charges, rather than to seek the advantages of sovereignty; to advise, to encourage, to protect the peasants who dwelt on their lands, and at the same time to give them example and assistance amid the miseries which overwhelmed the west of Europe.

CHAP. II.

THE FUGITIVES.

“Julian found the military establishment entirely disorganized in Gaul: the barbarians crossed the Rhine with ease, and extended their ravages even to the cities situated on the shores of the sea, whilst all the inhabitants trembled at their very name; for the Emperor Constantius had given him no more than three hundred and sixty soldiers to reinforce his army.”—*Zozimi Historiar. Lib. iii. p. 703.*

BUT few months had elapsed from Felix Florentius's return to Noviliacum, when one day directing his looks to the opposite bank of the Loire, he saw with surprise an unusual movement. Herdsmen were seen driving their numerous cattle to the river; horses and mules arrived, laden with the spoils of ransacked houses; men on horseback armed with lances; others in greater number on foot, carrying their different instruments of tillage, formed successive groups on the bank; behind were seen women surrounded with children, and carrying

infants in their arms. All moved slowly, apparently overcome with fatigue; but at intervals the crowd was seen to quicken their steps, and to hasten towards the river; then again to stop, finding they were not pursued.

In the mean time some horsemen spurred their steeds into the river; they sounded its depth with their lances, then turned back, as it were disheartened; they tried various parts of the stream, where the curling waters seemed to point out a shallow spot on which their horses might recover breath. They likewise sounded the parts where the waters presented a smoother surface, proving the current to flow with less rapidity. After each fruitless trial they were seen to hold counsel together. Meanwhile some felled trees, and worked to bind them together, in order to form a raft; others threw into the water a pig, of all domestic animals the best formed for swimming, to force him, as it were, to attempt the desperate enterprise of crossing the river, which the horsemen were about to engage in; they followed his course with eager eyes, and evinced the greatest anguish when they saw him carried off by the current. At last, seeing on the terraces of Noviliacum some spectators attentively watching their motions, they stretched out their suppliant

hands. The waves of the Loire in those days were seldom furrowed by boats. The commerce between the different towns situate on its borders was trivial in the extreme; the agricultural produce of each district was amply sufficient for the sustenance of its inhabitants, and they rarely bartered with each other. As often as the provinces were alarmed by the approach of some hostile band, or by a wandering horde of barbarians, those who flattered themselves that a river might shield their property, destroyed on its banks all the boats which those formidable and dreaded pillagers might take possession of. The lord of some large estate was the only person who preserved a few barks for the purpose of ferrying his crops to the nearest city; but when he made no use of them, they were moored in a sheltered harbour, where he carefully guarded them as his most essential, yet most dangerous property; for during the times of war or invasion (and for these two centuries when had war ceased to rage!) these boats could bring to his very gates his most dreadful foes. On the other hand they could afford him a refuge when all other ways of escape were closed. Even when the approach of an enemy was not apprehended, it was necessary to keep the boats from the slaves, ever ready to make their escape,

after having pillaged the property of their masters.

Below Noviliacum a deep hollow had been excavated in the rock on which the castle stood. Of this they made a port, which communicated with the river by means of a sluice. Its entrance was always closed by massive gates of oak, fastened by strong padlocks; it was masked so as not to be perceived at a distance, for it was almost as necessary to conceal the possession of boats as it was to keep them in a place of security. This port contained two large galleys and two smaller vessels; but Felix had only three boatmen at Noviliacum; the others dwelt in the camp of the legionaries, which was distant more than a league: he launched, however, a boat, which might contain about twenty persons, and having left orders to assemble the mariners necessary to man the larger vessels, he threw across his shoulders the belt, to which his faulchion was appended, leaped into the galley, and steered towards the opposite shore.

As he approached, he remarked the agitation, the impatience, the hurry of the crowd, which awaited him on the northern bank of the Loire. Several women, raising their children in their arms, plunged into the water up to the girdle, anxious to be the first to enter the vessel; others

wrestled with those who hurried to the water's edge, wishing to be in the foremost rank; others stood apart, with their families and their baggage, and seemed to promise each other they would not separate.

Felix saw that he could not land amid this crowd, which, by rushing with impetuosity into his vessel, would inevitably cause it to founder. When within hearing, he ordered his boatmen to rest on their oars, whilst he hailed the fugitives, and asked whence they came, and what they wanted. Innumerable voices instantly replied; but in this confused medley of sounds, he could distinguish only the words "massacre," "conflagration," "barbarians," "Franks." But these words were sufficiently explanatory. Six years back Clovis, king of a small tribe of Franks, after having conquered Syagrius, had taken possession of Soissons; from that day the formidable adventurers, who followed his standard, or they who without acknowledging him for their sovereign, yet esteemed him the most skilful and fortunate among the chiefs of his nation, had each year scattered terror and destruction in some one or other of the neighbouring districts.

"I can receive no more than twenty persons
"on board this vessel," said Felix, "but I have

"larger ones on the opposite side of the river.

"Say, are there among you any good boatmen
"who can manage them?"

"I can, I can," shouted a hundred voices
together.

This hurry appeared to Felix an indication rather of the fear than the skill of those who shouted. He again addressed them: "there
"must be in your party some ferrymen of the
"Seine; who are they among you that have
"managed boats on that river?"

"I have, I have!" repeated the same voices, and at the same time several men rushed into the water to reach the boat. Felix was obliged to unsheath his sabre, and to declare that none should enter but those whom he should appoint.

But now eight or ten horsemen, who by their cloaks of sheep-skin and long lances were known to be shepherds, advanced on the bank opposite the boat, and pushed back the unarmed throng. In the middle of this group was a female; she was veiled and wrapped in a common mantle, so that nothing had yet attracted the attention of Felix to her. He saw her give some orders to one of the shepherds, who, quitting her, ran through the crowd, and soon returned with about fifteen men. "These," said the female, addressing Felix, "are the only men

“among us who can manage a boat. Transport them with despatch to the opposite shore, for time presses. I fear the Franks are not distant; at least an hour will be required to perform the passage and to return, and in less than half that time, perhaps, all these unfortunate beings who now implore your compassion, may be weltering in their blood.”

At the same time the boat was pushed to land, and the ferrymen took their places. “And you also,” said Felix to the female who had spoken to him, extending his hand to assist her to embark.

“I will await your return,” she replied; “I will not accept of security unless it be shared by those who have protected me.”

“I will wait also,” exclaimed Felix, springing on the shore. “Go, Diocles,” said he to the veteran who held the tiller; “let us not long await your return.”

Diocles bowed his head in obedience; the boat pushed off, and as some of the new ferrymen had seized tools of culture which could best supply the place of oars, all set to work, and the boat cut the waves with rapidity.

Felix drew near to the female who had addressed him; one of the fugitives told him that she was Julia, daughter of Julius Severus, sena-

tor and count of Chartres. Her face was concealed beneath her veil, but her voice and demeanour evinced that she was young; her shape was elegant and her action graceful. "I have duties to fulfil towards these unhappy persons," said she to Felix; "but you ——" Felix, indeed, would have found a difficulty in proving what benefit he could render them by sharing their dangers; but he felt it impossible to remain securely in the boat whilst a woman voluntarily exposed herself to danger. "Let us prepare," said he, "to defend ourselves for an hour; longer is not necessary for our safety."—"Make the attempt," replied Julia. "But they have, for these two days, fled before a handful of men," said she, casting her eyes upon the crowd that surrounded her. "We came from the neighbourhood of Chartres; that town the Franks have burnt; they there bathed themselves in the blood of its inhabitants. Those who fell under their battle-axe were, doubtless, as much attached to life as these fugitives, yet they defended it not."

"Have you been pursued?"

"Our band has so often been seized with panic fear; has so often fled without looking behind them, that I know not even how far we have really been pursued."

“Has the enemy any horse?”

“The Franks are on foot, and fight only
“with their battle-axe, but some Sarmatian
“horse have joined them; they it was who first
“entered Chartres, and it is, without doubt,
“they whom we thought we saw at our heels,
“and who caused us our last alarm a few hours
“back.”—Felix eyed the assembled crowd to
seek some men fitted to second him. Saving a
few shepherds, accustomed to brandish the
spear in guiding their flocks, or in repelling the
wolves, he saw not one countenance that be-
spoke courage, or even that degree of resolution
necessary to defend life in the last extremity.
Fear, cowardice, and cunning were written on
the faces of these slaves, accustomed to the most
degrading punishments;—of these peasants—
oppressed in turns by their masters and by the
servants of their masters. Felix did not continue
a research which shook his own courage. “My
“friends,” said he to them, “I ask of you but
“one effort;—but one only effort;—that will suf-
“fice to save both your own lives, and the lives
“of those most endeared to you. What then if
“you are pursued? If we are attacked on this
“extreme corner of the land, ere retreat is
“possible, will ye not prefer to die like brave
“men, defending your wives and your children,

“rather than suffer yourselves to be slaughtered as lambs?”—While Felix was speaking, he observed that the men in the first ranks near him slowly drew back, and the women advanced in their place. Soon he was surrounded by females only. They replied to his exhortation with a sort of energy, “What you have said is true.” They strove in their turn to animate the men of their band to the combat. “What are those who cause you to tremble, more than yourselves,” said they, “their bodies are not more inured to fatigue than yours; their swords are not more keen. But these Franks have a heart; ye have none.”

Felix, convinced of the justness of the rebuke; of the impossibility of escaping, with such defenders, a horrid massacre, should the Franks come up before the boats returned, was pale with indignation, when he remarked that the shepherds who had accompanied Julia, brandished their lances, shuddering with passion. Instantly he unsheathed his sword and exclaimed to them: “Follow me.”

Luckily the spot where the fugitives had gathered together could easily be defended. It was a plain of alluvial soil, formed by mud and sand from the river; but at the distance of four or five hundred paces, the hills at

the foot of which the Loire had formerly flowed, formed an amphitheatre; these hills were rugged; in more than one place the naked rock was seen, in others the steep slope was covered with bushes, with thorny ulex, and thick shrubs, which offered an impenetrable barrier. Two other winding paths led from the river and united at the top of the hill. By these paths only was the descent practicable, especially for horsemen. When Felix had climbed to the summit of the hill with the shepherds, and had convinced himself that no enemy was within sight, he called the peasants, to whom this information had given a little confidence; he ordered them to fell some trees, which he threw across the paths; he made them also open some trenches, by means of which he soon rendered the descent totally impracticable.

This work was not useless. As Felix was still occupied on the hill, a shepherd pointed to about twenty horsemen who were approaching at full gallop. They were mounted on small Tartarian horses; a bow was thrown across their shoulders, a long sword hung by their side, and their short tunic was furnished with scales of horn, which covered each other, the jingling of which was heard as they rapidly advanced. As soon as the pioneers who sur-

rounded Felix saw them, they uttered a loud shriek, and abandoning their labour, hurried towards the river. Their arrival brought disorder and scattered dismay among the crowd assembled on the banks. The women, the children, ran about in despair, and the mountains rang with their cries. However, the boats from Noviliacum at length arrived, and the daughter of the senator Julius Severus, resumed among the fugitives that authority which strength of mind gives over those who are conscious of their own weakness. Felix from afar saw her conducting the embarkation: first she placed the women and the children in the two largest boats, next the cattle, the principal wealth that remained to the fugitives, and the different effects which they had saved from pillage; she suffered not the men to embark until all that could be transported was placed in safety.

In the intermediate time the Sarmatians had arrived at the summit of the hill; but there they were stopped by the bulwark which Felix had raised across the path. When they saw thence the boats laden, they concluded that before they had surmounted the obstacle which stopped their progress, the fugitives and the booty which they carried would be out of their reach. They then discharged a shower of darts against

Felix, who retreated slowly with his shepherds; and the enemy instantly turned their horses and rode away. Felix, when arrived at the bank of the river with his small troop, found a boat waiting for him, in which he crossed the stream without difficulty and without danger.

CHAP. III.

A DAY AT NOVILIACUM.

“ Thus slaves, on hearing a false report of their masters’ death, throw away the curb, break the yoke, run from the table to the dance, from the dance to drunkenness, and make the deserted dwelling the theatre of their licentious sports.”—*Claudiani de Bello Getico*, tom. ii. p. 144.

ALTHOUGH the boat which conveyed Felix quitted the bank some time after the larger vessels, yet as it drew less water, and cut the stream with more rapidity, it reached the opposite side before the others. Sylvia Numantia, supported by Eudoxus the grammarian, who had begun the education of our hero, and accompanied by two matrons and four young girls, her slaves, awaited his arrival on the bank. “ My dear Felix,” said she to her son, pressing him to her bosom, “ I have this day “ discovered that you possess the blood of Ma-

“jorian. Much anguish did I experience when
“I saw Diocles return without you. Still more,
“when from the top of the hill I observed the
“horse of the enemy; but in the midst of my
“troubles I gloried in having a son worthy of
“my emperor and my husband.”

“How many fruitless endeavours, Felix, have
“I made to tranquillize your noble mother,” said
Eudoxus. “It was in vain I told her you would
“not have remained on the opposite shore had
“there been danger; that it could not be sup-
“posed you would expose the precious life of a
“senator to preserve the worthless existence of
“a few peasants; it was in vain I assured her
“you could have no other intention than to put
“them under the guidance of your superior
“prudence; hardly did she deign to listen to
“me. But such are the cares of a mother, or
“as is said by our sublime poet, Claudian, who
“I may almost say instructed my childhood—

“Sic æstuat ales,
“Quæ teneros humili fetus commiserit orno.”

Felix knew that the high-sounding words of the grammarian were never united with noble thoughts, and that his quotations were the object rather than the ornament of his conversation, he therefore did not think it necessary to

reply. He pressed his mother's hand with a look of tenderness. "They will soon be here," said he, "what shall we do for them?" The vessels, indeed, had now crossed the Loire, but they had been carried down the stream, and some of the passengers were slowly towing them along the bank towards Noviliacum.

"The utmost kindness and hospitality," replied Sylvia, "shall be shown to those for whom my son has exposed his life. Moreover, if Julia Severa be among the fugitives, as she is the daughter of one of your father's friends, she will not be a stranger in our house."

At this moment one of the galleys arrived at the foot of the landing stairs. Julia was the first that landed: advancing towards Sylvia, with a mixture of dignity and deference, she said "Some unfortunate Romans are come to supplicate the hospitality of a Roman matron; Gauls are imploring the benevolence of a countrywoman. The miseries which for so long a time have overhung our country, have first fallen upon us; but, doubtless, fate intends to save us from further calamities, since it has directed us to you."

"Come, child of Severus," replied Sylvia, "the house of Florentius shall be to you a second paternal roof."

Julia raised her veil to embrace the matron who so cordially welcomed her; then Felix could see and admire features which before had been concealed from him. Julia was not yet twenty years of age; her hair was black, her eyes were of the same colour; but in her countenance much suavity was mingled with vivacity and dignity. The clearness of her fair complexion was rendered still more striking by the contrast of her raven locks. The fatigue of the day, the different emotions she had experienced, animated her cheek with the most lively colour; and as she spoke, that colour alternately increased and subsided. She was about the middle stature, but her demeanour imprinted on her figure a character of dignity and majesty, even when she wished to evince her respect towards the widow of the senator Florentius.

Felix could not withdraw from the contemplation of her graceful form: the noble and intelligent expression of her physiognomy confirmed the first impression that he had received from her generous conduct on the opposite banks of the Loire, and corresponded with the image he had pictured to himself from the sweet sound of her voice. He felt that had he then seen her, there would have been no merit in

wishing to remain where she remained; to share her fate appeared to him a blessing, and not a sacrifice. Eudoxus, viewing her with eyes that appeared not insensible to the attractions of beauty, repeated some lines of Horace rather happily applied. Julia blushed, but she immediately replied by another verse of the poet, on the sacred bonds of hospitality.

The disembarkation meanwhile continued, and the unfortunate beings, who at first had thought only of saving their lives, seeing themselves landed on this peaceful shore, recalled to their memory all the possessions, all the friends they had lost. Fear yielded to melancholy reminiscence. Each family assembled around the wretched remnant of its property. The women, seated on stones or trunks of trees, concealed their faces on their knees, whilst their children, weeping, embraced them; the husbands looked on in silence, holding by the halter a horse or an ass laden with the wreck of their household, or a cow which they had saved from the enemy. All seemed, for the first time to face futurity—a futurity which for them began on a strange land, and which they were not certain of rendering supportable even by the most painful toils.

The greater part of the fugitives already felt

the cravings of hunger. From the time they had quitted their dwellings these poor people had partaken of no other food than that which they had been able to bring with them in their rapid flight; and although accustomed to the coarsest fare, it was no easy matter to satisfy the wants of nearly three hundred persons. Felix, however, actively employed himself in providing for their wants. He distributed among them bread, broth, and salt meat. As soon as they had partaken of their scanty repast, he sent them to their final destination, placing the slaves with his slaves, the shepherds with his shepherds, the labourers with his labourers. Each was to admit one of the strangers to a share of his dwelling and provisions; the same kind of hospitality which the master afforded was to be shewn to these strangers by all his dependants. In a short time each family was placed in its appointed situation, and the yards of the castle and the surrounding meadow were no longer covered with fugitives.

Whilst busied with these emigrants, Felix had left Julia Severa to the care of his mother and Eudoxus. When he returned to them, a look from Julia evinced her gratitude. In thus ministering to the wants of her companions in adversity, he afforded more real pleasure to

Julia than she would have felt had his attention been solely confined to her.

During this interval Julia had been placed in her apartment with her nurse, the only one of her female attendants who was in the number of the fugitives. The whole right wing of the villa or castle of Noviliacum was occupied by the gynæceum, or apartments for the females. A long dormitory divided into small chambers or cells, occupied the back part of the building which faced the east, and overlooked the fields. Each cell contained but one bed, and was used only for the purpose of sleeping; but the opposite or western front of the building, commanding a view of the Loire, was divided into elegantly-furnished rooms which communicated with these chambers. Their walls were ornamented with costly hangings from Vienne and Lyons, gilt leather, or Persian carpets, which the merchants of Marseilles had imported into Gaul. The couches which extended along the walls were covered with the same materials; elegant drapery adorned the windows; the corners of the apartments were decorated with statues and vases of porphyry, and some pictures by the best Roman painters in Adrian's age were hung upon the pannels.

The eyes of the new guest soon turned from

this rich furniture to contemplate the still richer picture viewed from the windows. The Loire was thence seen to wind his broad stream under the tufts of ancient trees crowning the ridge on which stood Noviliacum; the abundance of his waters gave by turns to the landscape the ornament of a spreading lake or a rolling river. Above the castle where the meanders of the Loire concealed from the view a part of his course, the spectator might have fancied he saw a smooth expanse of water, which reflected the neighbouring objects: below, the eye could follow the long course of the river, which, gradually diminishing, appeared in the horizon a streak of silver. On both banks delightful slopes arose one above the other; the more distant were fringed with venerable trees; the others were covered with vineyards; most of them were crowned with ancient Celtic buildings, long since mouldering in ruin: of these some recalled the past glory of the Biturigi and the Carnuti (the inhabitants of Bourges and Chartres) who had fought on these frontiers; the others brought to recollection the gloomy superstition of the Druids, who offered, as appeasing sacrifices to their gods, the blood of human victims, and who had performed their rites in the neighbouring forests. The setting

sun shed his last rays on the summits of the most lofty hills, which in a fine autumnal day shone like fairy islands floating amid an ocean of vapour.

The apartments of the women opened upon a long terrace, set apart for them. Beneath this terrace were built the small cells of their slaves; and the large halls where they assembled to spin and weave their cloth, which was nearly all manufactured at home. Several passages communicated from the apartments of the mistresses to those of the slaves; but every evening these were carefully closed with strong iron bars, which effectually fastened each door. In a family, as in a state, the inevitable consequence of absolute power is distrust. A master had unceasingly to fear the vengeance of those servile beings who surrounded him; whose degraded condition, an outrage to humanity, was so often aggravated by cruel or unjust chastisement. The resentment of the women was often no less to be apprehended than that of the men; and seldom did it happen that a mistress exposed herself to be surprised during sleep, by any of those unfortunate females, to whom her death would have been the signal of festivity. From these precautions which she took against all her slaves, she excepted her nurse only, whose fidelity was insured by her feelings, ap-

proaching nearly to those of a mother. She was the only slave against whom the mistress did not fortify herself with bolts and bars.

The left wing, inhabited by the men, was divided nearly in the same manner. These two wings were separated from each other by a large open hall, rising to the height of the whole edifice, and consecrated to divine worship. At this the masters assisted from two galleries, one of which had a communication with the apartments of the males, the other with those of the females; they did not mingle with the slaves or the people, who always assembled at the bottom.

Julia, after having taken some repose, refreshed herself with a bath, and changed the coarse mantle which she wore during her flight, for a dress more suited to her rank, came to meet Sylvia in her apartment. It was there that the supper, the principal repast, was spread at sun-set, and it was there that Felix joined them. According to the Roman custom, low couches were placed along three sides of the table; Sylvia had given a share of hers to the stranger, the second was occupied by the grammarian Eudoxus, and the priest Martin, the chaplain of Noviliacum. Felix was alone on the third.

During the repast the presence of the slaves busied in waiting, had obliged the guests to

avoid in conversation the subject which occupied their minds, namely, the events of the day, and the dangers which threatened all the Romans. The two females were silent; Felix had eyes for no one but the fair stranger, while Eudoxus and Martin engrossed to themselves the whole conversation. These two men, equally intent on the good cheer; equally indifferent about all that affected others only; equally convinced, the one that his deep erudition, the other that his sanctity would ever render them desirable guests, and procure for them in the houses of others, the enjoyment of those possessions which they had not inherited from their ancestors; equally certain that neither the Franks, the Burgundians, nor the Visigoths could ever pillage their property, did not after all find the times in which they lived so disastrous as was pretended.

The grammarian, Eudoxus, had not forgotten that exactly a hundred years back, the grammarian Eugenēs, educated as well as himself in an inferior situation, had worn the imperial purple. Each large family among the Roman senators, as also among the barbarian princes, had in its establishment a grammarian, who performed in turn the duties of secretary and pedagogue. But in the eyes of Eudoxus the merit of none of these hired literati appeared comparable to his own.

He knew, or at least he thought he knew, all that ever had been taught in the schools of Athens, Alexandria, and Rome; and he firmly believed that all sciences were comprised in the writings of the ancients. Rhetoric, Poetic, and Dialectic appeared to him the only paths open to human genius; these alone did he honour as a noble exercise of the mind, while he frowned with sovereign contempt on studies which related to the more vulgar interests of mankind, although perhaps improperly dignified with the name of science; such for instance as law, finance, military tactics, or agriculture. Though to power and rank he always showed the most humble deference, yet he regarded those who held a conspicuous station in society, as having no other duty to fulfil than that of providing for the comforts of the learned; and he estimated the merit of public characters by the protection they gave to literature. He basely adulated the great whom he stood in need of, but nevertheless his contempt even for them would sometimes escape him in terms by no means agreeable, for he had no sense of magnanimity or honour, and he could not attune himself to sentiments of generosity, which had no place in his heart.

The priest Martin, more disdainful, more re-

“ speaks of mine honourable patron, Felix Flo-
“ rentius? When he says, *that peace sprang*
“ *from the sources of the river, and that it in-*
“ *creases with the flowing of its waters,* would not
“ one think he alludes to the happy tranquil-
“ lity we now enjoy on the southern banks
“ of the Loire, contemplating the calamities
“ of our neighbours in the midst of our own
“ festivities?”

Felix, Julia, and Sylvia, although not struck with the propriety of these applications, had nevertheless, by monosyllables, assented to the opinion of the grammarian in favour of his well-known prepossession for the latest of the Roman poets; but the selfishness of the last observation, which unintentionally escaped him, excited the displeasure of his two patrons. Without clearly knowing in what manner he had displeased them, he saw that it was necessary to change the subject, therefore turning towards Martin, he asked him what he imagined could be the etymology of the name *Absis*, which the priests gave to a certain part of the church? Then without being at all discouraged by the look of contempt with which Martin appeared to censure his ignorance of all things sacred, he instantly offered his own explanation, for he had put the question for the

sole purpose of answering it himself; and once engaged in etymological disquisitions, the favourite object of his studies, nothing could possibly stop him. He then spoke for his own satisfaction, not for that of his hearers; no other speaker could be heard; his eyes were never taken from his own plate, except when directed towards the various dishes on the table, nor did he once venture to look the other guests in the face; it seemed he feared he should there read the impatience or the disgust produced by his long and tiresome dissertations.

CHAP. IV.

AN INVASION OF THE FRANKS.

“ All that province called Armorica followed the examples of the inhabitants of Britany, and gained its liberty in a similar manner, expelled the Roman magistrates, and formed a sort of republic.”—*Zosimi Historian. lib. vi. p. 826.*

WHEN the slaves had retired, Sylvia, hoping that Eudoxus would stop of himself, waited for his first pause, but after one etymology came another, and another ; “ for heaven’s sake, dear Eudoxus, a truce to your etymologies ; let us now think of the situation of our guests, of our friends, of ourselves. Do you not perceive that the calamities under which they are sinking are already at our own door ? Julia Severa answered our first questions concerning this unexpected attack, but all the circumstances attending it are still unknown to us ; I hope she will now commence her recital of them, make us acquainted with the train of her misfortunes, and explain what at first

“ might appear contradictory.—Where, charming Julia, is your father ?”

“ My father is at Soissons with that Clovis who is acknowledged by the world to be the most enterprising and the most valorous of all the kings of the Franks.”

“ Is he then a prisoner ?” said Felix.

“ No: if there be any honour amongst the barbarians, if they have any respect for the law of nations, he must be in safety, for he went to them in order to negotiate a treaty of peace.”

“ Peace! Under what conditions can we expect it at their hands?” said Sylvia, “ the Franks, so long our allies and our soldiers, have taken advantage of our civil wars, the calamities of Italy, and the forlorn situation in which the emperors of Constantinople have left Gaul; they have turned their arms against us, and since the defeat of the count of Soissons, Syagrius, it is easy to foresee that they will not grant us peace until they have stripped us of all our possessions.”

“ Unfortunately,” said Martin, “ I can speak to the truth of this, for at the time that invasion took place, I was at Rheims with our holy father the archbishop Remy, three thousand warriors only came out from Cambray, bearing on their shoulders the battle-

“axe, and commanded by this same Clovis;
“and they routed or cut to pieces all the le-
“gionaries and the federates, which the Count
“Syagrius had been able to levy in the second
“Belgium, that province of Gaul in which our
“soldiers were the most numerous !”

“It is true,” replied Julia, “since that time
“there has not been a single battle in which the
“Roman eagles have once been displayed ; then
“all resistance ceased, and in each campaign the
“Franks advanced still farther in the midst of
“defenceless cities. In the last six years they
“have taken possession of or pillaged, one after
“the other, Rheims, Senlis, Noyon, Beauvais,
“Meaux, and last of all Paris, that charming
“city, so beloved by the illustrious Julian, and
“from which, little more than a century since,
“he so often sallied to lead his victorious legions
“against the barbarians.”

“The illustrious Julian, did you call him,”
said Martin, “say rather the infamous apostate ;
“he re-established the filthy worship of the
“idols from which Gaul is not yet purged,
“which hath drawn upon us the wrath of hea-
“ven, and bitterly are we now punished for the
“crimes he committed, as well as for the victo-
“ries he gained.”

“To the munificent presents given to my an-

“cestor by Julian, we owe our fortune, our
“rank, and even our very name,” replied Julia;
“besides the Franks are no more Christians
“than Julian was, and would to God they
“were equally tolerant; then the churches had
“not been ransacked, the priests would not
“have been led away into captivity, nor the
“blood of many shed upon the altars. My
“father, who held the rank of count of Chartres,
“not by the grant of the Emperor Anastasius,
“who appears to have forgotten us, but by the
“confidence of his fellow citizens ——.”

—“Every one knows,” said Eudoxus, interrupting Julia, “that the illustrious senator, Julius
“Severus, is more esteemed, more powerful,
“and more rich than all the other inhabitants
“of Chartres united. In whom could they with
“more propriety confide than in him whose interests
“were so evidently the same as their
“own?”

“My father,” said Julia, “sought for some
“shelter against the danger which threatened
“us; with this view he went to the court of
“Clovis, and since resistance was impossible, he
“wished at least to save us from the horrors of
“conquest.”

“Is this the manner,” cried Felix, “these
“barbarians receive the tenders of a Roman

“ senator? What—they surprised you, they
“ pillaged you, even when you were negotiating
“ peace—better have died sword in hand.”

“ My father felt as you feel; there is nothing
“ that he would not have attempted for the sal-
“ vation of our unhappy country, but his first
“ project failed. Eighty years have elapsed
“ since the cities of Armorica found in their
“ confederation against the barbarians that
“ safety which now we seek in vain. Rouen,
“ Bayeux, Evreux, Nantes, Rennes, and Van-
“ nes, without withdrawing their allegiance
“ from the Cæsars, have provided for their de-
“ fence by their own exertions. No barbarian
“ has yet been able to enter even the district
“ under their rule—still less the interior of their
“ walls; yet they are defended not by legion-
“ aries, not by federates, but by their own na-
“ tive soldiers. It was with these cities that my
“ father began a negotiation; he wished that
“ Chartres might be included in the Armorican
“ confederacy; and if the senator Felix Flo-
“ rentius had resided for any length of time in
“ that country, he would doubtless know that
“ the plan of my father extended still further,
“ that it comprehended Tours and Orleans, and
“ all that remains to Gaul of liberty and Rome.”

Felix declared that he had some knowledge

of this plan; Sylvia was better acquainted with it; for under the emperors the women were accustomed to interfere with politics, which were often considered as an intrigue of the *boudoir*, and were united with the gallantry or with the vices of the masters of the world. Without bearing the name of empress, many women had governed Rome; Placidia, Honoria, Eudoxia, had but too much influence over the last period of the empire of the west; and it was not more extraordinary to see in the higher ranks of society, women in the full possession of state secrets, than it was to find men resolved to know nothing whatever of the causes of those revolutions, the fatal effects of which they felt so severely.

“The project of my father,” continued Julia, “was unsuccessful, although he pursued it with
“ardour during many years; the cause of its
“failure is that very territorial wealth which the
“learned Eudoxus has just congratulated me
“upon. Believe me the time is come when we
“can do no more than weep over the extent of
“possessions which our ancestors strove still
“further to increase. We have driven from
“our territory that free population which formerly constituted the country’s glory, and now

“ would be our bulwark. What have availed
“ us, these two last days, such boundless lands,
“ which produce not a single soldier? What
“ advantage does Chartres derive from her vast
“ wealth, when she cannot reckon one single
“ citizen? The cities of Armorica, it is true, do
“ not contain such riches; but they contain
“ many more men, and those men are free.
“ There the inhabitants are still Gauls; not
“ Romans; there the fields are still the pro-
“ perty of the peasant who tills them; and if he
“ pay a service to some more opulent citizen, it
“ is to a man whom he regards as the head of
“ his own family, and whom he thinks honour,
“ duty, and hereditary affection call upon him
“ to defend, still more than to serve.”

“ They are, I suppose, the very *Ambacti*
“ whom Cæsar speaks of in his *Commentaries*,”
said Eudoxus.

“ Yes,” replied Julia, “ although five cen-
“ turies are gone by, Armorica is still nearly
“ the same as when Cæsar visited it. You
“ might traverse the whole of its western dis-
“ trict without meeting with one man who un-
“ derstands Latin. Nay, it is with a feeling of
“ pride that you hear the rustic reply to all our
“ questions that *he knows not Roman*, as though

"his answer were enough to inform us also
"that he knows neither slavery, nor servility,
"nor fear."

"Well," said Eudoxus, "now that I have
"heard wealth called an evil, I shall no longer
"be surprised if I hear people add that civili-
"zation is the origin of slavery, or that the
"hoarse, barbarous jargon of the Celts, is pre-
"ferable to the rich, melodious language that
"has been immortalized by so many prodigies
"of eloquence and poetry. It was after the
"same fashion that the ancient philosophers
"were wont to enliven their repasts with the
"discussion of such paradoxes, and certainly
"that exercise of the mind is much more fitted
"to the joviality of a feast than those gloomy
"political arguments, which, when broached at
"such a time, cannot be beneficial to the health.
"But now we have come back to my old
"ground, I will ask the beautiful Julia
"which ——"

"Excuse me, honoured tutor," said Felix,
interrupting him, "we will return by and by
"to the superiority of languages; but pray let
"us first hear how it is that project failed which
"just now caused my heart to beat with joy,
"inasmuch as it presented to me a new hope."

"The *Amotiana*," resumed Julia, "demand-

“ed a statement of the military strength of
“Chartres; and when they received it from
“my father they refused our alliance. They
“told us we were so weak that we could never
“be of any assistance to them; and being the
“most exposed to invasion, we should be con-
“tinually calling on them for protection. They
“added, that to defend us they would be obliged
“to march their troops too far from their own
“country, and thus damp the ardour of their
“own soldiers, who never fight well unless
“within view of their hearths; and that more-
“over they would be exposed to the treachery
“of our slaves. The final answer of the Ar-
“morican senate reached my father at the same
“time as the news of the entrance of the Franks
“into Paris. Commanding thus a passage
“across the Seine, they were now our imme-
“diate neighbours. No means of resistance
“remained to us. We had to choose either
“submission to the barbarians or death from
“their battleaxe. My father resolved on obe-
“dience, though the greatest humiliation to
“which a Roman senator can descend. He
“has demanded a conference with Clovis by a
“herald at arms, and is gone to Soissons.”

“This then is our only resource,” said Mar-
tin, “nay, our only hope; and since the time is

“ come when Gaul must pass under the yoke
“ of the barbarians, it is to the Franks alone we
“ must turn our eyes. They at least are not as
“ yet tainted with heresy; and if the blessed
“ Remy will cause the light of Christianity to
“ shine upon them, they will receive it in all its
“ purity; whereas those Visigoths, who six
“ years ago penetrated to the Loire, and forced
“ me to flee to Rheims, would have brought
“ with them all the heresies of Arianism. But
“ pray how comes it that the Franks attacked
“ you while your father was proffering peace and
“ submission to them ?”

“ Clovis,” replied Julia, “ commands only
“ the Salian Franks; those who surprised us
“ at Chartres are the Ripuarii Franks; they
“ are under the orders of the treacherous Clo-
“ deric, son of Sigebert. He wished, I sup-
“ pose, to throw an obstacle in the way of the
“ treaty my father was negotiating; he feared
“ that the policy of Clovis might snatch from
“ him that wealth which costs him so little
“ trouble to gain.”

“ But,” said Felix, “ I should like to hear
“ you speak of yourself; that subject you seem
“ to have forgotten in your narration.”

“ No, indeed,” she replied, “ I am not
“ enough of a Roman to forget the dangers to

“ which I have been exposed. Need I say that
“ the recollection of them is attached to the
“ gratitude I owe to those who rescued me.
“ Can that horrid night of the eighth of the
“ ides of September ever be cancelled from my
“ memory? You know that the house of my
“ father, built upon the banks of the Eure, is
“ about half a league distant from Chartres;
“ there, in perfect security, he left me a week
“ before, trusting to the pending negociations
“ with the Franks, and the honour of Clovis.
“ The day before yesterday, in the evening, the
“ family had retired to their apartments, and
“ were already reposing in the arms of sleep;
“ I alone remained, enjoying on the terrace the
“ freshness of a beautiful night, when suddenly
“ a confused noise, in the direction of Chartres,
“ struck my ear. Methought I heard the min-
“ gled sound of warlike instruments and shouts.
“ Soon this noise was drowned in the howlings
“ of the watch-dogs, which, answering each other
“ from the farm-yards and neighbouring vil-
“ lages, seemed to warn us of the approach of
“ danger. At the same time pillars of fire rose
“ in the horizon in the direction of Chartres
“ and augmented my terror. Several of the
“ buildings of that city were, doubtless, a prey
“ to the flames. I awoke my nurse; soon all

“ the family was aroused. Assembled on the
“ terrace, we reasoned among ourselves upon
“ the probable cause of this terrific spectacle;
“ we listened anxiously, we exhausted our ima-
“ gination in conjecture, when our attention
“ was absorbed by the horrid cries that issued
“ from the *ergastulum* of the slaves. Those un-
“ happy wretches, who were principally Varr-
“ dals, Heruli, Gepidi, and Burgundians, had
“ perhaps been informed beforehand of the ap-
“ proach of their liberators; or, probably, the
“ tumult in our dwelling had caused them to
“ guess it; for their prayers ever invoke cala-
“ mities on our heads. They had arisen; some
“ among them had broken their bonds, and
“ combining their efforts were striving to burst
“ the gates of their prison. They hoped by
“ their shouts to intimidate their guards, while
“ they inspirited each other.

“ My father was never an inhuman master to
“ his slaves; never did he aggravate the miseries
“ necessarily attached to their condition; but
“ you know how much their treatment depends
“ on those inspectors we call *villici*, slaves as
“ well as themselves; these persons conduct
“ them to their labour, and oftentimes they
“ abuse their borrowed authority, in order to
“ inflict cruel punishment on their companions

“in misfortune. Ours were detested by the
“slaves; and if the *ergastulum* had been broken
“open, we could have expected no mercy at the
“hands of the captives. We therefore united
“our efforts in closing the passages and bar-
“ricading the doors, to secure us from the
“attacks of these enemies, who were more to
“be dreaded even than the Franks, as they
“were already in the house. Meanwhile the
“shouts which issued from the *ergastulum* grew
“louder and louder; the shackles which the
“captives had torn from their hands served
“them as instruments of demolition; we heard
“the repeated heavy blows, and every moment
“expected to see them burst the walls, when
“the shepherds whom you saw with me gal-
“loped into the yard. They confirmed our
“fears that Cloderic had entered Chartres at
“the head of the Franks and given up that
“city to pillage; they informed us that a party
“of Sarmatian horsemen had joined him, some
“of whom were scouring the country in search
“of our castle. One of the shepherds, the son
“of my nurse, had by his skill and presence of
“mind, succeeded in sending them off in a
“wrong direction. We had some chance of
“escaping before they discovered the deceit, but
“not an instant was to be lost.

“ When this intelligence was made known, I
“ found that I was deserted by all, save this
“ shepherd and his mother. All the principal
“ officers of our household, expecting every
“ moment to see the Sarmatians come to the
“ assistance of the rebel slaves, took to flight
“ in all directions. My father’s two secretaries,
“ the steward, the bailiff, the freedmen, the
“ domestic slaves, in whom we placed the most
“ confidence, had all disappeared. It was with
“ difficulty that Dumnorix, the shepherd, my
“ nurse’s son, could find in our stalls a single
“ horse for me; all the others had been taken
“ by the fugitives. While he was saddling it I
“ ran into the apartment to take some jewels.
“ I could scarcely trust my eyes when I saw
“ the house so completely deserted. It was in
“ vain I called; it was in vain I sought for
“ my attendant; not one of those whom I
“ was accustomed to see constantly near me,
“ presented himself to perform the slightest
“ service. At length I departed with my nurse
“ and eight armed shepherds; and not being
“ able to divest myself at once of the habits of
“ civilized life, I took with me a considerable
“ quantity of gold, which could not be of any
“ service in my flight; but I forgot to provide
“ myself with provisions. We fled with the

“utmost speed from the house of my father,
“and were at no great distance, when the in-
“cessant clamour of the slaves was suddenly
“changed to a loud shout of joy; they had
“forced the door or burst the walls of their
“prison—they were free.

“We took the road to the Loire, and soon
“came up with some groups of fugitives who
“were hastening to Aquitaine for safety. Some of
“these were from Chartres, and they gave us a
“dreadful account of the sacking of that town,
“and the cruelties the Franks had committed.
“Others had been flying still longer before the
“same body of Franks; they came from the
“banks of the Seine and the environs of Paris.
“Those whom I pointed out to you as boat-
“men were of this party. During two days
“of flight and mutual suffering, Dumnorix be-
“came acquainted with all our companions in
“misfortune. The number of our band was
“augmented on the road by the inhabitants of
“all the villages through which we passed.
“Terror pervaded the country of the Carnuti;
“and that terror was augmented by the fugi-
“tives, who, imploring assistance, described the
“horrible cruelties which marked the invasion
“of the Franks. The small party of Sarma-
“tians which followed us to the banks of the

“Loire, stripped those who lagged behind, and
“ransacked the churches and deserted villages;
“they caused us to quicken our march, and
“obliged us to keep together, for I think our
“number kept them in awe, although we were
“so little capable of defence.

“The fatigue of two nights of terror, and
“a march of two days, have confused in my
“mind all the more minute circumstances
“of our flight. We reposed only when our
“horses were sinking under fatigue. Then we
“rested in the woods, the turf being our bed,
“and I was overpowered by sleep in the day as
“well as the night. Dumnorix, by his courage
“and his judgment, perhaps also by his affec-
“tionate devotion to me, had acquired a species
“of command over the whole body. He di-
“rected our march; he superintended our re-
“pasts; he caused all the provisions to be
“placed in a common stock, and he watched
“over their distribution, that they might not be
“exhausted until we reached the Loire. But
“when we arrived nearly at the end of our
“flight, he lost that authority which common
“necessity had placed in his hands. To him,
“however, I owe my life: he it was who persnad-
“ed me to fly; he guided my steps; he watched
“over me; he gave me food; he, in short,

“brought me unto you; and during the whole
“time he evinced the same unremitted atten-
“tion, the same devotion, and the same delicacy
“in his services.”

The recital of so many toils convinced Sylvia that the stranger stood in need of repose. She immediately called a slave, and led Julia to her apartment, preceded by torches of resin. When she retired, Martin and Eudoxus both expressed, in a lively manner, their admiration of the elegance of her figure, the accomplishments of her mind, and the charms of her conversation. They were neither of them much accustomed to eulogy; to counterbalance, therefore, this unusual effort, their observations soon took a turn of sarcasm, at the expense of other ladies whom they compared with her. Felix, though much more struck than they with admiration of her graceful figure, and what he had observed of her mind and temper, remained silent. He retraced in his memory what had just fallen from her lips. He fancied that he was meditating on the projects of Julius Severus; he strove to bring to his consideration whether or not the time was come when every Roman citizen should second his plans. He was, indeed, already thinking on the means of acting in conjunction with Severus, in order to give more im-

portance to the negotiations he had entered upon. This seemed the only expedient that remained to shield from such dreadful calamities both his own family and the Roman cities in the neighbourhood. But although he thought he was occupied in the public interest only, his imagination incessantly strayed to Julia Severa. He thought he should render an important service to her father; he would shew to the Franks that all the Gauls were united by the ties of interest to the count of Chartres; he would assist him in preserving his rank; and when in conjunction with him, he should have obtained some pledges for the safety of the Roman province in Gaul, he thought he might ask in return some pledges for his own future happiness. He fancied his union with Julia Severa would gratify the ambition of the count of Chartres and that of his mother, and amply fulfil all the wishes he had formed.

CHAP. V.

A ROMAN COUNT IN GAUL.

“Are not almost all the men of rank in the cities of Gaul become still more vicious by their calamities?—Have not luxury and debauchery been carried to such a pitch, that even the princes of the town had hardly risen from the festive board, when the enemy entered their walls?”—*Saletani de Gubernatione Dei*, lib. vi. p. 139.

EUDOXUS and the priest Martin retired soon after Julia, but Felix awaited the return of his mother, with whom he held, that same evening, a long consultation respecting the measures they should adopt. The Loire appeared to them a sufficient bulwark against the immediate invasion of the Franks; but the danger came nearer and nearer, and in all probability would soon reach to them. With the exception of Armorica, not one of the Roman provinces had within itself the means of resistance; and even the choice of the barbarian master they were to obey was no longer left

to them. The Franks advanced in their conquests with rapid strides; the Visigoths, on the other side, retreated; it seemed that the minority of Alaric the Second rendered the latter incapable of defence, so that, even had the Romans preferred their authority to that of the Franks, they could expect no protection from them whilst their kingdom was torn with intestine commotions.

It was therefore the opinion of Sylvia, as well as of Felix, that the necessity of placing themselves on the defensive, was less urgent than that of entering into a league with the governors of the neighbouring cities, in order to continue the negotiations which Julius Severus had commenced; to promise to the Franks, conditionally, obedience and tribute, provided the possessions and the persons of the Romans were guaranteed; to demand satisfaction for the last invasion, and to obtain restitution of the prisoners and booty taken from Chartres, as a pledge of the friendship which was to unite the two nations.

The vast possessions of Felix Florentius being situate at nearly an equal distance from Orleans and Tours, rendered it absolutely necessary that he should concert measures with the governors of those two cities, for that of Blois did not then

exist, or at least was no more than a hamlet. With both these governors, Felix thought it would be proper to have a speedy interview; but Sylvia did not conceal from her son the little confidence she had in the character and talents of these two men. The first, Numerianus, was indebted to one of the later emperors for his earldom of Orleans; the other, Volusianus, the archbishop of Tours, had, by the intrigues of the priests, attached the lordship of that city to his episcopal see. Yet the less Sylvia confided in the skill of the one or the sincerity of the other, the more necessary did she think it to take advantage of the present circumstance to bring them to a determination, whilst their minds were still filled with terror by the calamity which had befallen Chartres.

Felix and his mother were far from being easy respecting the fate of Julius Severus. Although Clovis was but young, he had already shewn his character. It was well known that to the bravery of a barbarian chief, possessing full power over the minds of his soldiers, he added an uncurbed ambition, to the gratification of which he sacrificed the most solemn promises and the most sacred oaths. They were convinced that so long as Julius Severus resided at his court as the representative of the Carnuti,

he would respect in him the right of nations; but now that Chartres was pillaged, and its population destroyed, it was possible that Clovis would regard Severus as no more than a common prisoner, whom it might be prudent to get rid of, since his presence in the camp of the Franks would continually reproach them with a breach of faith. If Clovis should regard Severus as belonging solely to the town of Chartres, all hopes were lost: whereas by making him the representative of the Gauls, and shewing to the king of the Franks, at an early period, the interest which the Roman cities took in his preservation, motives of policy would ensure the good faith of the barbarian.

Felix agreed with his mother that before dawn of day on the morrow, he would depart for Orleans; and his faithful Diocles, being ordered to accompany him, immediately sent forward a relay of horses, by a slave, to a place called the *Delubrum*, or Temple of Pan, being half way to Orleans. At the same time expresses were sent to the camp of the legionaries and that of the federates, with orders to bring a certain number of veterans for the defence of Noviliacum and the pass of the Loire, in the event of a sudden attack. Felix and Sylvia then separated in order to take repose.

On the following morning, two hours before sunrise, Felix and Diocles set forward on their journey, and finding fresh horses at the Temple of Pan, six leagues distant, they arrived in Orleans at the gate of the palace of the Count Numerianus, ere he had given audience to any one. Felix, when announced, was immediately admitted to his presence.

"This day," said Numerianus, offering his hand, "was already destined to be a day of joy in Orleans; but it will be doubly so, since we receive in our walls a guest of such rank. Felix Florentius, you are come opportunely to share the festivities with which my people intend honouring my birth-day. Know that the whole town is ringing with joy. I have ordered distributions of bread and wine to be made to the people in the public square. The half of these largesses I shall furnish from my own purse: I know I am not forced to act in this liberal manner, and that the *curia*,* which provides the other half, might have provided the whole; but you are aware, Felix, that men in our situation must be distinguished by their munifi-

* A name formerly given to the municipal magistracy of every city.

“cénce. The Circus is prepared for a combat
“of wild beasts, and you will this evening see a
“bear from the Pyrenees, baited by Molossian
“mastiffs of the genuine breed. After these
“combats, a troop of actors will recite a short
“comedy, a piece adapted to the occasion, and
“written by the celebrated poet, Prudentius,
“my grammarian. I should have preferred,
“according to the custom of former times, the
“giving to the public a combat of gladiators ;
“but that, you know, the scruples of our bishops
“will not allow ; yet I think the populace, on
“such a day as this, would view with pleasure
“the punishment of some of those rebel pea-
“sants, those *bagaudæ* who ravage our lands.
“The souls of the vulgar, you know, delight
“in strong emotions, and we statesmen must
“yield to the taste of the multitude.”

Felix had heard this long harangue without being able to put in a single word ; besides, he was unwilling to damp the jovial spirit of his host by his alarms and mournful forebodings ; though at the same time it occurred to his memory that not long since the inhabitants of Treves, the capital of Gaul, while assisting at the sports of the Circus, had been surprised and massacred by the Franks, yet he hesitated to give an old senator counsels of prudence, which might be unfavourably received. He congra-

tulated him upon the anniversary of his birth, and the interest his fellow citizens seemed to feel in his welfare; but he excused himself from taking any share in the festivities, by reason of an important business concerning which he had come to consult him.—

—“Business,” did you say, replied Numerianus, “surely you must be aware that on such a day as this we cannot talk of business! Moreover (and, by the bye, as your birth will one day call you to a share of the government, my example may be of some use to you,) I make it an invariable rule never to talk of business but on the two first days of the week. Believe, an old statesman, a man whom the Emperor Flavius Glycerius himself chose for the governor of Orleans, and who, if I may venture to say it, has performed the duties of his office for these nineteen years with no small glory, I never met with any business that could not be delayed.”

—“Yet methinks the sacking of Chartres”—

“What say you—the sacking of Chartres?”

“Know you not then that the city of Chartres was surprised on the eighth of the ides of this month, by Cloderic, with his Ripuarian Franks? That it was ransacked and partly burnt, and that the greater part of its inhabitants are flying for their lives?”

This news disturbed the merry mood of Numerianus; he called a slave and bade him go instantly to the president of the curia, and desire him to attend at the palace. "These curiales," said he to Felix, "who are generally nothing more than mere shopkeepers, artificers, and people of low rank, as soon as they are called to the council, (or as they pompously term it, the municipal senate,) begin to think themselves of some importance, and sometimes take it into their heads to have a will of their own. But I contrive to keep them in good order; the curiales of Orleans never venture to disobey my commands, I warrant you."

"It was my great uncle," replied Felix, smiling, "the glorious Emperor Majorian, who first gave, in his edicts, the name of municipal senate to the curiæ: indeed his great ambition appeared to be the increasing of their dignity, and restoring to the citizens a consciousness of their importance in the state."

"Yes, Majorian was one of those lovers of theory who are never pleased with things as they are, always dreaming about improvement, as though we did not see every thing decline and die in nature; and as if we alone should be an exception to the general rule. Majorian was an innovator. Such people some-

“ times may delude by their words, but it is in
“ application and practice that the real states-
“ man is seen. With regard to Majorian, he
“ was never fit for business, as you may judge
“ by his end.”

Felix had no desire to dispute with Numerianus on the preference due to practice or to theory; he therefore resumed the conversation on the pillage of Chartres, and the mission of Julius Severus to the court of Clovis. The count of Orleans did certainly listen, but it was with evident marks of impatience. Felix insisted on the necessity of treating with Clovis in the name of the free cities of Gaul, and particularly on the adopting of some measures for the security of Orleans, the most important of them all, as it stood nearest to the seat of danger, and, by commanding the pass of the Loire, was the key to the others.

“ These are deep political measures,” replied Numerianus, “ which we must not adopt without the most serious consideration: every body
“ thinks himself capable of forming projects,
“ but the care of digesting and executing them
“ must be left to those who have been long conversant with business.”

“ But were I myself to go to Clovis and treat
“ in the name of the towns on the Loire, would

“you give me authority to support the interest
“of Orleans?”

“You go to Clovis! Why, don’t you see
“what has happened to Julius Severus?”

“It is for that very reason I think it high
“time for us to be on our guard. Will you
“give me some instructions?”

“Ah! here comes the president of the curia
“whom I was expecting,” cried Numerianus,
anxious to escape from so serious a deliberation.
“Come hither, Licinius, and pay attention to
“what I say. You must first shut the gate
“leading to Chartres, and be careful no one be
“admitted coming from the country of the
“Carnuti. If any enemy to public tranquillity
“should scatter alarming reports of what has
“happened in that direction, instantly throw
“him into prison.”

“My lord,” replied the president, “I can
“do no more than answer for the gate; you
“know that the officers of the revenue have
“for a long time complained of the breaches
“every where seen in the walls of the city; and
“why prevent the entrance of other Carnuti,
“when so many hundreds have already taken
“refuge here since their disaster?”

“Their disaster did you say? You then

"have heard something concerning the disaster
"which has happened at Chartres?"

"The storming and sacking of that town by
"the Franks, are known to all."

"And, pray, what say the people of Orleans
"respecting this event?"

"They pity the Carnuti, but they add, that
"their misfortune was occasioned by their own
"imprudence."

"Are the preparations for the sports in the
"Circus finished?"

"We await your presence to complete them."

"Have you a sufficient quantity of laurel for
"the triumphal arches?"

"I have procured six waggon loads, and I
"think that will be enough. But some soldiers
"should grace the triumphal march of your ex-
"cellency, and the only company we had here
"took to their heels last night, as soon as the
"news of the taking of Chartres reached them."

"The scoundrels are never to be found when
"they are wanted. Well, well! we must make
"the peace officers put on their armour, for
"you must be sensible I cannot do without
"soldiers;—and the cash for the gift, has that
"been paid? Excuse me, my dear Felix, you see
"how I am harried. I thought proper this day
"to make what we call a gift to the people; and

“ as it is only with a view of attaching them to
“ the government, and rendering them more
“ faithful, you must be convinced that it should
“ be done at the expense of the community.”

“ Priscus, the jew,” replied the president,
“ would not advance the amount of the next
“ impost at less than thirty per cent. interest.”

“ Well, I see we must come to his terms.
“ Let us hasten to the Circus. Farewell, my
“ dear Felix. On such a day as this I am
“ obliged to consecrate my whole time to the
“ duties of my office, but we shall meet again
“ at the Circus.”

“ How,” said Felix, “ do you take no pre-
“ cautionary measures against the attack of the
“ Franks ?”

“ The Franks, sir ! They dare not ! Orleans
“ is so strong a town !”

Numerianus then departed. Felix, astonished at so much stupidity; blushing at having travelled so far to meet such a man, remained some time motionless. At length he quitted the palace, at the gate of which he found Diocles in attendance. This Illyrian veteran had long followed his father. As a reward for his fidelity, he had received from Sylvia a house in the camp of the legionaries, and a plot of ground; but he preferred living at

Noviliacum, where he was considered, in some respects, a member of the family. He rarely quitted his young master, and above all, he delighted in following him where there was any probability of danger.

Diocles spoke but little, and seldom addressed Felix unless previously spoken to. However, when he passed under the laurelled arches, and the wreaths of flowers with which the palace of Numerians, and all the streets leading to it, were decorated, he could not refrain from saying, in the warmth of his feelings, "some stones
" in the walls of Orleans had surely been more
" useful than so many flowers. But the old
" saying is a true one, 'cowards at times are
" more daring than the brave.' The gosling of
" the Loire lays his head under his wing to
" roost, at a time when the eagle would have
" watched."

" Ah ! said Felix, I fear, indeed, these poor
" people will be the victims of their thought-
" less confidence."

" No, the Franks are drunk to-day ; they are
" sleeping off the fumes of their wine."

" Yes, but probably they will make the at-
" tack to-morrow, or at least in a few days ; their
" drunkenness will not last for ever."

" No, but it will be a long one, and half a
" cohort of your true soldiers would make easy

“work with the fellows that entered into Chartres; soldiers, said I? Where are they now to be found?”

“Hast heard any news of the Franks at Chartres?”

“Orleans is full of fugitives from Chartres, and fresh ones arrive every hour.”

“The danger still exists then?”

“No, no, quite the contrary; the sheep never begin to run away before the wolf has carried one off. I tell you, master, be on your guard when cowards are quiet; when once they are frightened, the danger is almost always gone by.”

“But, after stopping at Chartres, the Franks will advance.”

“No, they will draw back to carry off their prisoners, and divide the booty, and if any one would buy the captives, this would be the time to follow them.”

“If I had found any wisdom in Numerianus, I would propose to send a deputation to the king of the Franks.”

“If I had supposed you came to seek for wisdom in Numerianus, I could have saved you the trouble of the journey; I tell you, master, what you wish to be done, do yourself; expect assistance from no one.”

“ Yes, but the count of Orleans must send
“ to the Franks for a safeconduct ere I can
“ trust myself in their camp.”

“ I will go,” said Diocles, “ and demand a
“ safeconduct for you.”

“ What, without any official protection; with-
“ out any pledge for your own safety ?”

“ I will carry the sacred wand, as is custo-
“ mary among them. The Frank kills his
“ brother to reign in his stead; he robs his
“ host; he swears, the better to deceive, and he
“ perjures himself in the face of God as well as
“ man; but he respects the ambassador, and
“ has never been known to commit violence
“ on him who bears the sacred wand.”

Felix approved of the proposal of Diocles. He wrote to Julius Severus, giving him intelligence of his daughter, and informing him that he would soon be at Soissons, to act in concert with him at the court of Clovis, for the security of the cities of Gaul. For that purpose he requested him to obtain his safeconduct from the king of the Franks. He then partook of a slight repast, while his horses were resting, and departed for Noviliacum. Diocles, taking a wand, adorned with symbolical figures, honoured among the Franks, bent his steps towards the banks of the Seine.

CHAP. VI.

THE PRIESTESS OF PAN.

“ Having afterwards entered the territory of Treves, (about the year 550,) I found upon this mountain a statue of Diana, which these heathens adored as a deity. The Almighty having at length, by my preaching, worked on their rustic minds, they assisted me in overturning this colossal image, which my weak hands had not been able to shake, though I had broken all the others.”—*Vulfilaic, quoted by Gregory of Tours, book the eighth, chap. xv. p. 319.*

REGRET at having taken a useless journey, was not the only feeling that agitated Felix, as he returned to Noviliacum. He was also mortified and disconcerted at having no pleasant news to carry to Julia Severa: he had been from her a whole day, at the very moment she had claimed his protection; when she felt the greatest want of counsel, consolation, and encouragement, and he had done nothing that could tend to her advantage.

What he had seen of Julia's beauty, manners, wit, and disposition, pleased him; it was

the anxious desire of his mother, that he should marry, and he had promised to accede to her wishes: he was twenty-six years old; Julia was about twenty, their birth and fortune were equal; it was probable that no objection would be started by Julius Severus, an old friend of his father, who, in his present dangerous situation would eagerly seek for an additional support to his family. Matrimonial projects had more than once crossed the imagination of Felix, in the execution of which he fancied he should find no other difficulty than that of fixing his own determination. In his opinion there was scarcely a chance that Julia was already engaged: in the later times of the empire, most of the old families had been extinguished, either in consequence of a disinclination to early marriage, or the voluntary celibacy of their principal members, whose selfishness prevented them from undertaking the cares and duties of a father. The number of those who could aspire to the hand of the daughter of Severus was very limited, and recent events had been unfavourable to the introduction of suitors.

Felix, therefore, without fearing rivalry, waited only until his affections should be fully confirmed, and his resolutions immoveably fixed. He resolved to observe Julia, to seek opportu-

nities for developing her character and principles, and to say nothing that might involve him in an engagement. Moreover, in the present state of the country, when so many dangers overhung all those who bore the name of Romans; all that still remained of ancient institutions dear to their memory, and, which even threatened his family and himself, he thought that were he to give up his time to courtship, he should blush at his frivolity. He drove, therefore, from his mind the idea of Julia, to consider of the measures proper to be taken at his future conference with the bishop of Tours, and at the audience he had demanded of Clovis, and to determine on the arrangements he should propose to the barbarians, so as to gratify their avarice and ambition, without entirely sacrificing the liberty which the inhabitants of the Roman provinces still hoped to enjoy. He was astonished and almost angry at finding the image of Julia associated with all his thoughts, and at his ever seeing it before him, whether his imagination strayed to the camp of Clovis, or the cathedral of St. Martin at Tours.

Felix had intended to go from Noviliacum to Orleans, and to return the same day, but the distance was at least twelve leagues, and al-

though he had a relay, yet on his return he found the horses fatigued with the morning journey, and their speed much slackened. It was nearly sunset, when, accompanied by one slave only, he reached the Temple of Pan, where he had left his horses. These appeared to have been properly attended to during his absence, but the slave who had been sent the day before with the relay, and was to accompany him on his return to Noviliacum with the fresh horses, was too intoxicated to be of any service. When Felix found him in this state, it occurred to his mind, for the first time, that in the six remaining leagues he might probably regret the absence of Diocles. That veteran knew all the paths across the woods, all the shortest and safest cuts; his judgment was almost as infallible as his memory, and he could find his way, apparently with as much ease, in the night as during the day. The slave who accompanied Felix from Orleans, and whom, from the drunkenness of his companion he was forced to keep with him till he arrived at Noviliacum, did not appear by his countenance to possess the same skill; and when Felix asked him if he should be able to find his way in the dark, he replied, that the horses would not miss the road.

Felix would have preferred some other guide

to that of the instinct of his steeds only. These were eating their corn, which had been spread for them on the ruinous steps of an ancient temple dedicated to Pan, destroyed about fifty years previously, by order of a bishop of Orleans. On the ground near the steps lay some scattered columns; the slave, seated on the earth, leaning his back against one of these prostrate pillars, eyed his master with a look of respect and fear, and made vain efforts to rise; but to the repeated questions which Felix asked him about the road they were to take, he could give only unintelligible answers. The other slave had been sent to seek a guide; when he returned he informed Felix that he had been able to find no one in the neighbourhood but an old woman, who dwelt in a wretched habitation she had erected among the ruins of the temple, and who evidently had not sufficient strength to accompany the travellers.

Felix, rather astonished that the old woman did not come to him, desired the slave to conduct him to her habitation. The portal of the temple was entirely destroyed; the interior was filled with ruins, among which were seen to rise the tall stalks of hemlock, while ivy covered the side walls; the back wall was still standing; it served as a support to a kind of porch, the

thatched roof of which rested on fragments of columns, architraves, and sculptured marble. Here Lamia dwelt: Felix found her seated at her door; but as soon as he approached, she arose with respect not unmixed with dignity.

Lamia was bent with age; but the strong features of her face did not evince any infirmity; her cheeks had fallen in, her eyes were sunken, her skin was shrivelled and yellow, and there was something terrific in her meagreness; yet the expression of her countenance commanded attention; when she spoke her eyes were animated; then inspiration appeared in her looks; in the sound of her voice there was an emphasis and a confidence of expression which formed a striking contrast with her apparent wretchedness. There was something strange even in her garments, which exhibited a mixture of dazzling colours, costly silks and filthy rags; and Felix imagined that in her uncouth habiliments he could trace some parts of the vestments which in all ancient pictures were given to the heathen priestesses.

"My good dame," said Felix, addressing her, "night falls, and I want a guide to point out my way."

"Night hath already fallen for us," replied Lamia, eying him with a piercing look, "and

"many wanderers have I brought back to the
"true light."

"I feared that at your age, you might not
"have strength sufficient to become my guide
"to Noviliacum."

Lamia had at first supposed that the words
of Felix were figurative, and that in asking
something forbidden by the laws, he had used
equivocal terms, which in case of necessity he
could afterwards retract; but seeing he wanted
a guide only, she resumed with an air of indif-
ference: "I am speaking of times of yore; you
"must be aware that now I cannot think of re-
"moving from my dwelling."

"You are not alone here, I suppose. Can
"you furnish me with a guide?"

"I am alone: no one shares with me the ha-
"bitation of these ruins; neither doth it be-
"have any one to share it."

"How then alone on a heath, at your age,
"can you provide for your necessities?"

"Others have more need of me than I of
"them; those who consult me provide for
"me. My son, with the shepherd Sangiban,
"tends the flocks of your mother, Sylvia Nun-
"mantia, and he visits me every day."

This solitary life, and these mysterious an-
swers, excited the curiosity of Florentius. He

“ who worship the gods of the Druids; nay,
“ even this very year was the mistletoe of the oak
“ plucked in your forest. But alas! deserted
“ Gaul has lost her ancient race. Where, in
“ these days, are to be found the villages,
“ whence, in times of yore, were wont to come
“ the jovial procession of the Lupercalia? They
“ are in ruins, like the temple whose wreck now
“ serves me as a shelter.”

“ Since the destruction of the villages, you
“ then are the only person in this district at-
“ tached to the ancient worship?”

“ A worship that has no followers would need
“ no priestess.”

“ You say you are a priestess?”

“ I am; and not long since did a man, your
“ equal in rank, a senator, a count, come amid
“ these self-same ruins to burn incense before the
“ statue of the deity, and to consult the oracle.
“ Know you Julius Severus?”

“ Is Julius Severus then a pagan?”

“ He dares not profess paganism publicly. He
“ follows first of all the religion of power; and
“ though in secret he may honour the gods of
“ ancient Rome, yet he does not refuse to join
“ in the public ceremonies of your church. But
“ why should he profit by our guidance without
“ sharing also our dangers? Why should not

“ his name serve as a shield to us—to us, who
“ by divine inspiration, direct his conduct?”

“ Are his religious opinions known to many?”

“ To all in this country who profess the reli-
“ gion of Rome. We all regard him as our
“ head and our guardian; but he mistrusts your
“ Christian priests; from them he conceals him-
“ self; but should he ever become master, then
“ will you see more incense smoke on our altars
“ than on yours.”

Felix wished to know whether Severus had educated his daughter in his own faith; but of that Lamia knew nothing, or at least would say nothing. The other questions he put to her elicited no new information. Night was advancing, and as he could not procure any guide, he thought it prudent to stay no longer, but to take advantage of the twilight that he might not be obliged to rely entirely on the instinct of his horses.

This last glimmer of day-light was sufficient to enable the travellers to distinguish their way during the first hour of their journey. The country over which Felix was travelling, was wild; no large trees were to be seen on the hills: the bramble, the furze, and the heath, covered the soil; these shrubs, rising nearly to the height of man, formed brakes, which ren-

dered the pass difficult, but not impervious. Until now the path which Felix followed was the only one across these deserts; so that there was no chance of his straying. The slave was provided with a torch, which he could light as soon as the darkness of the evening should render its assistance necessary.

This path Felix took, his mind filled with the objects that had struck him in the dwelling of Lamia. He was neither a bigotted nor an intolerant Christian—but still he was a Christian; and the fear lest he should find Julia Severa a pagan, disconcerted all his projects—all the sweet visions which during the day had delighted his imagination. He felt no objection to treat of business, or to attach himself by the ties of interest or friendship to her father, although he was a pagan; but could he admit a difference of religion in the most tender and strict of all human bonds? Was it not probable that such a difference would raise an insurmountable barrier between him and his wife, and close the heart to all its most gentle effusions? Was there in morals, in philosophy, in politics, any question that did not in some measure include religion? How could he confide to his wife the education of his children, if they differed on this first principle? What had he not to fear at the

time when the approach of age gives new vigour to the errors of superstition? Was it not probable that his wife would abandon him at that time when, the attractions of youth ceasing to be powerful, man and wife feel the necessity of being united in heart, in thought, in reason? Was it not to be expected that the priests of another worship would gain over her mind an influence by so much the more fatal to domestic happiness, as it would be more clouded in mystery?

While Felix was absorbed in these meditations, the night had become dark, the slave had lighted his torch, and both continued to tread with rapidity the path before them, until they reached a small wood where the road divided. Felix was of opinion they should take to the right, but the slave asserted that their way was to the left; the overhanging branches of the trees prevented their seeing the distant hills, or any of those objects which sometimes are sufficient, even in the gloom of night, to distinguish the aspect of a country. The slave put his torch to the ground to examine the footsteps of horses; the last and most numerous were evidently on the left path, which, when left to themselves, their own horses followed, probably urged by the same motive. At the end of half an hour, this

path brought them to the bank of a small river; which both Felix and the slave were certain they had not crossed in the morning. The half wild horses of these deserts, going to drink at the stream, had left on the soil the footsteps which led them astray.

It was now necessary to turn back, and resume the other path; this the two travellers were about to do, when the barking of a dog, heard in the distance, induced them to hope that in following the banks of the river they might discover some habitation. After advancing two or three hundred paces, and passing a thicket which bounded their view, they saw before them, on the opposite bank of the river, a large fire blazing in the middle of the meadow, around which some men were watching with their dogs, while others lay asleep on some dried leaves; Felix called to them, and the slave waved his torch: one of the men on guard, following his dogs, then came to the brink of the river, so as to be able to reply to their questions. This was Dumnorix, the foster brother of Julia. As soon as he had recognised Felix, by the sound of his voice, he plunged into the river, the banks of which were in this place too abrupt to allow the horses to cross; he led them to a ford which brought them to the

meadow where Alan Sangiban had pitched his temporary camp.

Sangiban, the leader of five or six shepherds, whose business was to guard the flocks of Felix, had doubled his little troop by adding to it the fugitive shepherds who accompanied Julia. His hospitality, however, had not straitened his lodging, for it was under the canopy of heaven he had given them a place of repose by his side. Sangiban, a native of the Scythian deserts, had brought with him into Gaul the customs of his country. Three waggons, covered with tilts of skin or coarse wool, sheltered the wives and children of the shepherds; in these were the sanctuary, the bed, and the treasure of the wandering family; in these were contained all that was most precious in their estimation: no man but the husband durst direct his looks to the interior; the women, whose only dwelling was in the waggons, never quitted them without carefully veiling their faces. Large mastiffs faithfully watched these moveable habitations, around which the horses, the oxen, the sheep, and the goats daily assembled to receive their usual portion of salt. This opportunity the shepherds seized to milk the cows and the sheep; they then suspended their kettle from the branch of a tree placed on two upright

posts, and made their cheese in the open air. During the day they scoured the country on horseback, armed with lances, to keep off the wolves, and bring back the cattle which had strayed too far; in the night they spread under their waggons a bed of dry heath and fern; there they slept, wrapt in their fur mantles, and turning their feet towards a fire, which some among them in turn attended.

Sangiban, when he recognized his master, bowed respectfully before him. He offered to accompany him himself or to send two younger shepherds to serve as guides to Noviliacum. "It is rather dangerous," said he, "to travel alone in these wilds, where so many unfortunate peasants, driven from their homes, have no other means of existence than plunder. It is misery alone that causes the increase of the *Bagaudæ*; but they often wreak their vengeance on those whom they accuse of keeping all the riches of the country in their own hands." The two shepherds selected for guides being ready, Dumnorix declared he would also accompany Felix; he said he should be happy to render in that manner a slight service to the man who had preserved them from destruction, and who had so nobly shared the dangers of his gentle mistress. Felix, who eagerly

sought an opportunity to gain more information respecting Julia Severa, with pleasure accepted the offer.

Dumnorix felt as much delight in speaking of his mistress as Felix in listening to him. His language was animated, and he acquired a sort of half wild eloquence when, in a mixture of Celtic and Latin words, he endeavoured to convey an idea of her generosity, of her kindness, of her compassion towards all in sufferance, of her readiness to minister assistance to the aged soldier, to the hapless traveller, to the slave so often oppressed, so often unjustly chastised,—a compassion which she shewed even to the beasts of the field, who seemed to know the goodness of her heart, and to seek shelter under her protection. Dumnorix had many anecdotes to relate of Julia: each of which, bringing Felix better acquainted with her amiable disposition, augmented his affection for her.

After having for a long time unsuccessfully sought, in the conversation of Dumnorix, for something that might clear the doubt Lamia had raised in his mind, he endeavoured to solve it by this direct question: “Is Julia a Christian?”

Dumnorix seemed astonished. “Do not then,” said he, “all great men profess the reigning religion of Rome; and now that the emperor

“is a Christian, are not all the senators of the same faith?”

“I have reason to believe,” replied Felix, “that Julius Severus still preserves at least a concealed affection for the ancient religion, and that on a late occasion he shared in the worship of the gods of paganism.”

“He would be more than a man,” replied Dumnorix, “who could fathom what the mighty Julius Severus buries in his bosom. But why should we seek to pierce the mystery of different religions? Almost every individual around the fire we have just left, has a religion as different from that of the others as his language. I was born in Armorica; my mother tongue is the Celtic; my religion is that of the ancient Gauls; I give to my gods the names Hesus, Teranes, Camulus; Lamia’s son, whom you saw lying under the waggon, says I should call them Mercury, Jupiter, and Mars; he is a Latin, and follows the religion of his forefathers, whose language he speaks. The Frank Dietrich adores Theutates and Hermansul: Alan Sangiban worships the scimitar, as his ancestors did in the forests of Scythia; Ulphilas, the Goth, is an Arian, and Philip, the Greek, is a Christian. When, forsaking our native language, we endeavour to converse in

“that of the Romans, which every inhabitant of
“Gaul is obliged to learn, we find that by dif-
“ferent sounds we express the same ideas. Let
“us hope that it is the same with regard to our
“different religions.”

Thus conversing, the travellers arrived within
view of the lights of Noviliacum, and soon after
entered the yard of the castle, the end of their
journey.

CHAP. VII.

THE BISHOP OF TOURS.

“ The seventh was Volusianus, a man of northern extraction, very holy, very wealthy, and a near relation of the Bishop Perpetuus, his predecessor. In his time Clovis began already to rule in some of the towns of Gaul, on whose account this Pontiff was distrusted by the Goths, as he wished to place his province under the sway of the Franks.”—*Greg. Tiron. lib, x. c. 15. p. 386.*

IT was past midnight when Felix reached Noviliacum with his guides ; his mother and Julia were waiting for him ; his delay had caused them mutual uneasiness, and if Sylvia expressed her joy when she saw him, and pressed him to her bosom, Julia also betrayed, by her deep blushes, that she had participated in the anxiety of her hostess. Her emotion escaped not the observation of Felix ; he felt that although no mutual avowal had yet been made, a gentle harmony existed in their souls.

Felix described his reception at the palace of

Numerianus, the impossibility of fixing his attention, and how they had separated without coming to any conclusion. He thought he should have had to apologize for his want of success, but he found that his fruitless efforts had excited the most lively gratitude: each part of his narration left a deep impression on the mind of Julia, whose anxious eyes never lost sight of him; in expressing her obligations to Felix, the colour alternately animated her countenance and fled from her cheeks; her eyes still more than her words, appeared to implore a continuance of his protection.

Felix afterwards told them that he had sent Diocles to the camp of Clovis, entrusting him with a letter to Julius Severus, and ordering him to demand a safeconduct for himself. Sylvia shuddered at the idea of her son's placing himself in the power of the barbarians; and Julia considered it as another claim on her gratitude. It was for her father, and herself, whom he had before saved, that Felix was once more on the point of exposing his life. "My father," said she, "has some interest with the barbarian king. He has now, doubtless, need of your assistance; I think you will find his knowledge of mankind, his zeal, and, more than all his gratitude, of advantage to you in this new

“enterprize: surely my father can but love him to whom his daughter owes her life.”

This was a simple expression of her own gratitude: but there is a certain disposition of the soul, when words present alternately to the mind all the meanings of which they are susceptible; they then strike us as unexpected disclosures of what we most ardently desire. A look of Felix seemed to seek in the heart of Julia whether what he had done for her was sufficient to entitle him to her love: that look was so tender, so impassioned, that Julia's cheeks were suffused with blushes, as if she had said much more than she wished to express.

“If I have the good fortune to gain the friendship of Julius Severus,” said he, “it may indeed decide the happiness of my whole life.” Julia, in her turn, fancying she discovered more in these words than they seemed to express, again blushed deeply.

The suspicions which Lamia had raised in his mind, now again presented themselves to Felix, and embittered his feelings. He thought it possible he might instantly solve his doubts, by finishing his narration, and describing his interview with the priestess of Pan; but this he had not the courage to do. If he was doomed to find that Julia was a pagan, he did not wish his

mother to be a witness of the discovery. He thought that were he left to his own efforts, he should have resolution enough to tear himself from what was now no more than the delightful vision of his imagination; but the counsels, the exhortations of another, even those of a parent, would have galled and irritated his feelings, the chance of which he was unwilling to encounter. He therefore ended his narration by describing his arrival at the camp of Sangiban, and the zeal which Dumnorix had shewn in his service. "He spoke to me of you," said he to Julia, "and the hours glided on rapidly. He told me nothing which my heart had not anticipated; nevertheless I listened to him with pleasure. I could never have thought we had been so long on the road, or that I had given any cause of uneasiness to my mother."

"It is indeed later than you think," said Sylvia, "let us retire to enjoy the repose we all stand in need of; to-morrow we will consider what is to be done with Volusianus."

"I pray heaven," replied Julia, "the skill and artifice of that prelate may not do our cause as much harm as the folly and weakness of Numerianus. He is not our friend; and my father considers him as one of those ambitious and fanatic priests, who, under the garb of

“religion, strive to fix an iron yoke on the neck
“of man; and who, to attain their end, are
“careless of the consequences.”

These words, spoken a few minutes before their separation, excited a painful emotion in the bosom of Felix. It was possible that Volusianus resembled the portrait Julia had drawn; but in the opinion she had given of one of the most eminent prelates of the Gallican church, she had echoed the sentiments of her father: was it not to be feared that the prejudices she had imbibed from him against the men, might also extend to the doctrines they professed?

The next day Felix met Julia and his mother at the church; they were assisting at the service which was performing by the priest Martin. He kept his eyes constantly fixed upon Julia; she appeared to take her part in the prayers without affectation, without ostentation, and like a person in the habit of attending the ceremonies of the church. These observations were not, however, sufficient to dispel his apprehensions. The pagans did not believe they offended their gods by participating in the rites of Christianity, and most of them occasionally conformed to the religious customs of those among whom they lived.

After prayers Felix went to his mother's room; where the breakfast was prepared. Julia, in her morning dress, refreshed by sleep, and appearing 'already to have domesticated herself at Noviliacum, seemed in the eyes of Felix more beautiful than before : her looks expressed confidence and gratitude; her behaviour to Sylvia shewed that the day they had passed together had given them an opportunity of perfectly understanding each other, and forming a closer attachment.

Felix expressed a doubt whether he should proceed to Tours on that day, or wait until the morrow. "You will not find our apostolic father, Volusianus, at Tours," said the priest Martin; "he is gone to Angoulême to attend a conference to which he has been invited by Cyprianus and Tetradius, archbishops of Bordeaux and Bourges, in order to provide for the province of Aquitaine; but when he hears the news of the late invasion in his neighbourhood he will hasten his return." Felix knew that the prelates of Gaul kept up an active correspondence by means of pilgrims, monks, and mendicants, who were constantly passing from city to city; he knew also that the priest Martin, who, at the expense of his patron, hospitably received the strollers, was an

agent of that correspondence. He could not, therefore, doubt the accuracy of his information; and having calculated, with Martin and Eudoxus, the time requisite for Volusianus to receive news at Angoulême of the inroad of the Franks, and for his return, he concluded he might, without any inconvenience, pass four days with Julia, and put off his journey to Tours until the fifth. This unavoidable delay disconcerted a project, the execution of which they all regarded as of the highest importance; it would, nevertheless, be difficult to express with what patience the parties most deeply interested in the business resigned themselves to their disappointment.

The four days which Felix and Julia passed together, augmented the affection they already felt for each other. When they conversed, their opinions, their feelings, and their tastes, were the same on almost every subject: when they examined the pictures and the statues in the gallery; or when on the terrace, they viewed the landscape and the varied effect of cloud and sunshine, the same beauties struck them both. When Felix read the most celebrated poems of the age of Augustus, or of Pericles, Julia shed tears of delight at the sound of his voice. Sylvia, who was always present at their conversation,

watched with pleasure their growing attachment, and delighted in the hope that her son had found a companion worthy of himself. Julia yielded without diffidence to her feelings; they seemed to her the effect of gratitude only; for with her affection had always been a virtue, not a crime.

At length the day fixed for the journey arrived, and Felix departed; but on the road to Tours his mind was much more busied with Julia, than it was while he was travelling to Orleans. He recalled to his memory all the words he had heard her utter, all those looks, those sudden emotions, which, being less restrained than language, communicate more effectually the inmost thoughts of the heart. To all the objects they had surveyed together, he attached the image of her eyes, either downcast, or gently raised and fixed upon himself, sparkling with joy, or filled with tears; he thought of their walks, and then to every tree, to every seat on which they had rested, to every landscape they had admired together, he united the remembrance of the different inflexions of her voice, which again made his heart to beat with rapture. When his mind strayed to the consideration of what he should do at Tours, or in his future journey to Soissons, it was to anti-

cipate the moment when he should present himself before Julius Severus, and demand the hand of his daughter.

On his arrival at Tours, Felix was struck with the appearance of a whole town busied in the ceremonies of religion. A few soldiers were on guard at the gate, but it was not on them the townsmen relied for defence; their hopes of security were centred in a chapel erected in front of the guard house. Tapers were burning, in vast numbers, before the image, which was said to have the power of working miracles; the priests were officiating at the altar, and the soldiers were on their knees at the time Felix passed. In most of the shops which opened on the principal streets, were seen exposed for sale *Agnus Dei's*, crucifixes, crosses, images of St. Martin, intended to be consecrated at his altar; priestly vestments, church ornaments, and books of devotion. Churches, chapels, and oratories, were seen in every street; and on all sides resounded the chaunt of priests, busied in reciting their litanies.

As he advanced towards the cathedral, containing the shrine of St. Martin, Felix met Volusianus, successor to that archbishop, clothed in all the splendour of the sacerdotal garb; before him were borne the cross, some miraculous

images and standards; a band of musicians marched in the front, and the prelate was surrounded by priests chaunting hymns, and followed by many thousands of men, women, and children, moving slowly two by two, carrying tapers in their hands, and repeating the church prayers. Felix entered the cathedral, thinking that if he remained there, he should best know when the sacred ceremonies ended; and, consequently, when he might obtain an audience of Volusianus. The absence of all the priests who joined in the procession was scarcely perceptible in the cathedral, although their number was very great, for the perpetual chaunt, called the *Psallentium*, which was continued night and day by successive choirs of monks, had not been interrupted one moment.

St. Martin, the metropolitan bishop of Tours, had now been dead ninety years; he was considered the apostle of Gaul, and his see was regarded as the capital of the catholic religion in this province. His tomb was adorned with pious offerings, brought daily by the faithful; his vast cathedral, an inviolable asylum, was peopled with victims of tyranny, fugitive slaves and malefactors, who fled thither from the oppression of despotism, or the pursuit of justice. The devotion Felix had remarked in the streets, as well

as in the church, was, however, unusual; he was soon informed that public prayers of several days' continuance had been ordered by Volusianus at his return, on the occasion of the late inroad of the Franks at Chartres; and these ceremonies were performed as a measure of precaution against any attack that might be premeditated by the barbarians on the provinces to the south of the Loire. Felix was informed also, that the procession would in a short time return to the cathedral, and that in less than two hours he might obtain an audience of Volusianus.

The appearance of Volusianus was venerable, but inspired at least as much fear as respect. His stature was lofty, and his body, although exhausted by fasts and watchings, was upright, and, as it were, inflexible; his complexion was sallow, his cheeks fallen, and his brows shaded by short black locks; for age, which had left its marks on all his frame, had not whitened his hair: the contrast gave a peculiar harshness to his physiognomy. His piercing looks announced in the successor of St. Martin the severity of repentant sinners, rather than the kindness of his people; the undaunted champion of the sway of the faithful; the dread persecutor of pagans and heretics; a man, in short,

who would stoop to use all the resources of worldly policy to serve what he considered to be the interest of heaven.

Felix made known to him the intention of his visit, his desire of conferring with him on the means of defence which the inhabitants to the south of the Loire might adopt to shield themselves from the inroads of the Franks, or the negotiations by which they might prevent their aggression. Felix informed him that he had already asked a safeconduct of Clovis, but that before he proceeded to the court of the king of the Franks, he wished to receive the advice of the holy bishop of Tours.

"You may have already observed, young man," replied Volusianus, "that the same cares occupy our minds; but we have placed our cathedral, and the flock confided to us, under a protection more sure and more potent than that of worldly policy. Yet are not the negotiations with Clovis to be neglected: you will find him disposed to listen to you; our brethren in God are not without some power over the mind of that barbarian, and the name of Volusianus is not unknown to him."

"The assurance your holiness gives me," (holiness was the title then given to all bishops,)

“fills me with hope,” replied Felix; “we shall
“then be enabled to render the unfortunate
“Julius Severus——”

“Of him we need not think,” said the old
man, interrupting him, “the clemency of the
“Almighty hath at length given place to jus-
“tice; the chastenings of his daring foe are but
“beginning; long and direful will they be;—
“heaven grant his example may instruct and
“terrify the idolaters, and all the false Chris-
“tians, who though submitting to the outward
“forms of the church, still place their trust in
“the vain images of lying gods.”

“I know neither the religious opinions of
“Julius Severus, nor his conduct towards the
“church; of him I know nothing more than
“his misfortunes, the ransacking of his house,
“and the loss of his property; besides, the in-
“habitants of Chartres——”

“They are no more worthy of pity than he;
“have they not fostered abomination in their
“city longer than any of the inhabitants of
“Gaul? Was it not in the land of the Carnuti
“that the council of the Druids annually as-
“sembled? Was it not there they elected
“their chief, and taught their hellish doctrine?
“Was it not there they worshipped the demons
“whom they took for gods? Now that the work

“of justice is completed let us rejoice, for the
“iniquity of the fathers shall be visited on the
“children, even unto the third and fourth gene-
“rations.”

“But,” replied Felix, not wishing to be en-
tangled in disputes, “if we do nothing for the
“Carnuti, what shall we do for ourselves?
“Shall we wait until the Franks pass the Loire
“as they have passed the Seine; until even the
“sanctuary of St. Martin be pillaged——”

“Thou man of little faith ! St. Martin needs
“not thy assistance; when the season shall
“come, he will himself defend his people ! But
“it is not for ourselves; it is not for Tours
“alone, ’tis for the whole of Gaul, ’tis for pos-
“terity we must think. We will go to Clovis;
“we will offer to him our arms, our treasures,
“our forts; we will shew him the army of the
“saints, ready to combat for him; we will say
“unto him be thou our king; be thou the eldest
“son of the church, and we will make thee the
“most glorious monarch of the west; thee will
“we obey as we obeyed the Cæsars of Rome, and
“we will teach the Franks also to obey thee.”

“What ! Clovis the idolater; Clovis the wor-
“shipper of Theutates and Hermansul?”

“Say, Clovis who as yet is defiled by no he-
“resy, who shares not in the abominations of

“ the Arians, like that Visigoth Euric, whose
“ yoke we were for some time obliged to bear ;
“ or like his youthful son, Alaric the Second,
“ who haply thinks himself still our master :
“ say, Clovis who hath not abandoned truth for
“ error, as did the king of the Burgundians ;
“ who knoweth not even the name of that exec-
“ crable *Henoticon* we are threatened with by
“ the Emperor Anastasius. Clovis believes and
“ obeys. Though his soul be not yet enlight-
“ ened, he loves the pontiffs of the Lord, and
“ does justice to them. He is an idolater, but
“ our most holy father Remy (*Remigius*) the me-
“ tropolitan bishop of Rheims, is his counsellor
“ and his oracle. That holy man informs me
“ by letter, that he despairs not of soon bringing
“ Clovis within the bosom of the church. Mean-
“ while to men of the flesh must we speak ac-
“ cording to the flesh ; we must point out to
“ him the honours, the wealth, the absolute
“ power that await him, and then will Clovis be
“ a Christian. I fear none but that Julius Se-
“ verus : he is, I suppose, at Soissons with his
“ daughter ?”

“ His daughter is at Noviliacum with my
“ mother.”

“ What ! at Noviliacum ? Say, is she of extra-
“ ordinary beauty ?”

This unexpected question, put by a man of such solemn deportment, in the middle of a discussion on the deepest interests of religion and policy, completely disconcerted Felix; he blushed, he stammered, and at length he answered "yes, of very extraordinary beauty."

"You are in love with her, young man," said Velutianus, fixing his piercing eyes on him.

"You are in love with her; beware then lest she become the wife of Clovis."

"What, the wife of Clovis! Who can imagine such an event possible?"

"Her father. Clovis is young, and governed by his passions; his wife will decide his policy and his creed. If he demand a consort of the kings of the Visigoths, the Ostrogoths, or the Vandals, he will fall with them into the fatal heresy of the Arians: if Julius Severus seduce him, he will oppress the priesthood, perhaps re-establish paganism: if our holy father Remy should succeed in his plans, Clovis will be on our side."

"But Clovis is married—he has a son."

"Clovis is married according to the law of the Franks; but has he yet received the benediction of the church? What is marriage among the infidels but a shameful concubinage? This truth Clovis begins to see, and

“ provided his son Thierry be not bastardized, “ he refuses not to take another wife.”

Felix shuddered; a new fear presented itself to his mind; Julia, whom he adored, without daring to believe it; Julia, to whom he had not yet spoken of love, to whom he was not engaged, but whom in imagination he always associated with his future fate; to whom he involuntarily referred all his actions, and all his wishes—that Julia was perhaps promised to another. Her father, instead of willingly granting his request, as he had expected, might have a scheme, an ambition directly opposite to his views. The colour fled from his cheeks; he felt an icy coldness about his heart; he feared to speak, lest his trembling voice should betray his feelings. He however restrained himself, and continued the conference, apparently occupied with political affairs only. His inward agitation escaped not the observation of Volusianus; but the prelate thought proper to say no more on that subject. He considered it indispensable to hinder Julia from marrying Clovis; and the vigilance of another lover might be useful in preventing that union; but it formed no part of his schemes to favour a marriage between her and Felix, and thus expose himself to the power and skill of Julius Severus, the enemy of priesthood, se-

conded by all the influence and wealth of the senator Felix Florentius.

The sentiments Volusianus had expressed, inspired Felix with an equal detestation of his religious fanaticism, and his policy; but on the other hand he found him fully disposed to second him in the project for the furtherance of which he had come to Tours. Volusianus eagerly seized this opportunity of sending to the head quarters of Clovis a negotiator of so illustrious a name. He communicated to him his correspondence with the counts of Mans, Angers, Poitiers, Bourges and Limoges; the result of the conference he had just held at Angoulême, with the metropolitan bishops of Bourges and Bordeaux, and the last news he had received from the court of Alaric the Second; he explained to him what Aquitaine had to fear from the Visigoths; in short he made him perfectly acquainted with all the policy of that central part of Gaul, where the want of strength had not yet annihilated intrigue. The schemes of the chiefs of these different towns; their offers, their demands, their jealousies, all were clearly unfolded to Felix, by the man who more than all others might be said to hold the key of such secrets. After a conference which lasted great part of the night, Felix took leave

of Volusianus, having arranged with the prelate that full powers should be transmitted to him at Noviliacum, in the name of all the towns near the Loire, and that he should set out for Soissons as soon as he received his passport.

On his journey back to Noviliacum, Felix, constantly agitated by the new alarms the prelate of Tours had excited in his mind, meditated on the means of discovering the projects of Julius Severus, and the sentiments of his daughter, in order to know whether her heart was disengaged, whether she was worthy of his love, and whether he ought to foster or stifle an attachment which daily became stronger. He at length resolved to take advantage of the intimacy his services had established between them, to give an account of his conference with Volusianus, and observe how she would receive the news of the projects her father was said to have formed.

In the apartment of his mother he simply explained what he had learnt concerning the policy of the different parties, the intrigues, to which Volusianus had given him the key, and the negotiations that had been entered upon with Clovis. But when he obtained a private interview with Julia, he told her with concealed emotion, that, if he could believe the bishop of

Tours, she herself was much more concerned in the plans of her father than he had at first imagined, as her hand might become the pledge of reconciliation between the Franks and the Romans of Gaul. As he spoke, he observed her attentively; he could easily perceive that she had long since been informed of the designs of her father; but, from the death-like paleness of her cheek, and the tears that filled her eyes, he had reason to believe she did not wish to see them carried into effect.

As Julia did not instantly answer, Felix continued: "if it be true that Severus thinks of giving his daughter to the king of the barbarians, he will meet at least one man who will strive to thwart his designs." Julia directed her eyes towards him with an expression of tenderness and gratitude; she cast them down again, when she heard Felix continue in a stifled voice, "that man is Volusianus, who doubts the faith of your father, and dreads for his church the power with which you would then be invested."

"It was not to hatred," said she, "that I expected to be indebted for a defender."

"Be then indebted to love for a defender," exclaimed Felix, throwing himself at her feet; and while, with impassioned emotion, he pressed

her hand to his lips, sobs stifled the voice of Julia.

“Yes,” said she at length, suddenly mastering her feelings, and forcing him to rise, “Yes, “I accept the noble defender whom friendship, “hospitality, and all the feelings of generosity “now present to me : I accept him too as a “protector, not only against my enemies, but also “against even those who love me, and who seek “what they call my elevation. I may, perhaps, “swerve from filial obedience and duty ; but I “hold in horror the thought of becoming the “wife of a barbarian, of an enemy to our coun- “try, to our laws, to our religion ; to all that “is sacred among us : the wife of a man who, “from his most tender years, has given proof “that in cruelty and treachery he will equal the “most cruel and treacherous of his race. Ah ! “save me from him ; save me from my threat- “ened destiny, if it be true that the gods, or “rather the demons, have announced that I “must be his.”

These last words excited the astonishment of Felix ; he asked for an explanation, which Julia instantly gave him, although she was loath to accuse her father of so abominable a design. “I know not,” said she, “whether the creed of “my father differ from that in which he has

“ educated me; whether impressed with the re-
“ collection of what Rome was, he connects in
“ his mind the gods of the eternal city with her
“ triumphs; whether he thinks the religion of
“ the Deciuses and the Scipios better fitted than
“ that of the Constantines and the Theodosiuses
“ to revive the ancient virtues which have now
“ disappeared from the world. At least he
“ appears convinced that the priests of the an-
“ cient gods obtain by supernatural communica-
“ tion the knowledge of futurity; in this belief he
“ is confirmed by the Christian priests, for they
“ attribute the revelations of the oracles to
“ demons. I know that in a temple, not far
“ distant from this place, an aged priestess
“ stood before him on the sacred tripod amid
“ the ruins, and in her mysterious language
“ named me as the spouse of the future con-
“ queror of Gaul.”

In this description Felix recognised Lamia and the Temple of Pan, whither chance had conducted him a few nights before. He discovered with pleasure that Julia was not a pagan, though she spoke without acrimony of a religion which till lately had been that of the whole empire, and which her father still secretly professed. All that heretofore had caused him to dread an union with her was now removed. It was pro-

bable he would find on the part of Julius Severus many obstacles he had not foreseen; but he had an understanding with Julia, he knew that he was loved by her, though she had not directly avowed it: never had any one day produced so much happiness for him; never had he looked forward to futurity with more confidence.

CHAP. VIII.

JOURNEY TO SOISSONS.

“ At the time when Paris, as we are told, was for five years exposed to the attacks of the Franks, the famine was so great in the suburbs of the city that many perished of hunger.”—*Vita Sanctæ Genovefæ, Virginis, cap. vii. p. 370.*

AFTER his return from Tours, Felix passed a few days with Julia at Noviliacum; these were sufficient to establish habits of intimacy and confidence between them. He did not repeat the word love which he had uttered once at her feet: she, in her replies, had spoken of friendship only; but nothing was forgotten of that which had once been understood between them. He thought that as long as she lived under his roof he should wound her feelings, and be guilty of a breach of hospitality, were he to express all the emotions of his soul. He did not wish her to experience embarrassment or restraint in the asylum he had given to her. But he thought it sufficient to impose silence on his voice; his

looks were not subject to the same restraint, and the language they spoke was understood.

All the trifling events of the day, the monotony of which had often been irksome to Felix, acquired a new charm from the presence of Julia. The priest Martin seemed in the morning to have more fervour in his prayers, more tenderness in his denunciations against other men, more respect when he contradicted, more moderation when he condemned. Eudoxus appeared less absurd in his witticisms, less pedantic in his display of learning, less tiresome in his etymological dissertations. By the desire of Julia, Felix prevailed on Eudoxus to give them a lecture, and they left to himself the choice of the science he would teach. The grammarian, who was, in reality, very learned, undertook to expound the different systems of Grecian philosophy; he was delighted with the attention of his two young pupils, their docile silence, and the praises they lavished on his erudition and his mode of teaching; but he did not remark that, while he was speaking, a word, a phrase applicable to their situation and feelings, plunged them into a delicious distraction; the exchange of a look made them feel that their minds were wandering to the same point; and this reverie in the presence of each other was more expres-

sive than language, it was unconstrained, it embraced all their future life, all their wishes, all their hopes, subjects to which they discreetly forbade themselves the approach in conversation.

Meanwhile Diocles arrived at Noviliacum from Soissons, with a safeconduct for Felix Florentius and his suite: he also brought letters from Julius Severus to Felix, Sylvia Numantia, and his daughter. Severus expressed with elegance, rather than with feeling, his gratitude for what the hosts of Noviliacum had done for his daughter, the protection they had afforded her, and the hospitality they had shewn to the other fugitives from his estates. He appeared neither downcast by the inroads on his territories, nor cheered by the hopes of better times. His letters were faultless, but they gave no information respecting himself. He merely made known his intention of relieving Sylvia from the burden with which she had so generously encumbered herself, and of sending for his daughter to Soissons as soon as he could ensure her a safe and convenient journey. He added that, in his opinion, females should prefer a residence in the rear of the conquering army, to that of a country on the point of invasion. Should the inhabitants of Noviliacum be of the same opinion, he promised to obtain for them,

in the new kingdom of the Franks, under the protection of Clovis, a suitable dwelling, where they might await the events of future days.

Felix clearly perceived that Severus wished Sylvia to accompany Julia to Soissons; but neither Julia, his mother, nor himself, thought it necessary to take this hint. The calmness of Severus led to the belief that he was perfectly satisfied with regard to the intentions of Clovis towards himself, and that he expected to recover as a courtier, or perhaps, as the father-in-law of the king of the Franks, what he had lost by the sacking of Chartres. Julia and Felix agreed in this opinion, and both felt that this conviction should hasten his departure.

The letters of licence and instruction from the different towns, in whose name Felix was to treat, arrived nearly at the same time; even those of Numerianus, the count of Orleans, were not long delayed; he had sense enough to obey the word of command when it proceeded from the bishop of Tours. Felix Florentius was to present himself before Clovis as accredited only by the cities situate between the Seine and the Loire, namely, Orleans, Chartres, Mans, and Angers; those to the south of the Loire, Tours, Poitiers, Bourges, and Limoges, were obliged to keep up appearances with

Alaric the Second, king of the Visigoths, whose protection they had before accepted : Felix was, however, to offer in their name the same conditions at the moment when the Franks should be preparing to cross the Loire. These cities bound themselves to pay the kings of the Franks the same tribute they had formerly paid to the Cæsars, to obey their commands and to acknowledge them as sovereigns, with a stipulation that private property should be respected, the booty already carried off by the Franks returned, and the laws and municipal magistracy preserved.

Felix departed on the 5th of the calends of October (27th of September) with a numerous suite, a litter, some waggons, a few spare horses, and a brilliant equipage, the whole under the direction of Diocles. He had been told that the retinue of an ambassador would raise his dignity in the eyes of a barbarous nation; whereas such a display was certainly rather calculated to excite the cupidity of the Franks. But pride ever finds an advocate in the heart of man, and the wealthy never want plausible reasons to convince themselves that their luxury proceeds from their philanthropy.

Felix took the road to Chartres; the Frank, Cloderic, with his band of Ripuarians, had evacuated the city, and it was asserted that

Clovis had severely reprimanded him for violating an armistice concluded in the name of the whole nation. Cloderic, however, had plundered the churches as well as the private houses of all their valuable ornaments and furniture, and had carried off large troops of captives, who were sold as slaves at Paris.

Several of the fugitives had already returned to Chartres; they examined their deserted dwellings, the doors and windows of which had all been forced; they sought the valuables, the provisions, the magazines, which they fancied would have been preserved from pillage, as they had secreted or buried them in the walls or under the floors. The insatiable rapacity of the Frank had, in most cases, rendered their precautions unavailing; he had in one hour discovered the secret hoard which the owner imagined would for years have escaped the most diligent search. In many churches and houses were still seen the extended corse of aged men, infant children, and infirm persons, who had not been able to escape, and whom the ferocious soldier had murdered in cool blood, because he could expect no ransom from their friends, nor any gain by sending them to the slave mart. On all sides were seen the marks of gore and smoke left by the soldiers; and the spectator could not fail to

be astonished that so small a body of men had been able to commit such a general devastation. Felix hurried through the town, which excited no other feeling in him than that of grief.

It was at Paris that Felix met, for the first time, a body of Frank soldiers. An enormous tower, built on the southern bank of the river, defended the wooden bridge by which he was to enter into the island, at that time comprising the whole town. In front of that tower the Franks were standing on guard: they were easily distinguished from the other inhabitants by their blue eyes and cropt flaxen hair, the loftiness of their stature, and the carelessness of their looks, which seemed to announce that nothing was worthy of their curiosity, and marked the torpidity of their souls, except when war awakened their energy, or their eyes were sparkling in revels and carousals. They spoke to each other in a loud voice, and their rough, barbarous language, a dialect of the Teutonic, sounded harshly in the ears of a Roman: several of them were playing with their battle-axes, a weapon most formidable in battle, whether they fought with it hand to hand, or hurled it to a distance with never-failing precision.

The ancient inhabitants of Paris, although not yet accustomed to their new servitude, had

often felt the dreadful effects of the fury of their foes, without being able to discover its cause : they, therefore, endeavoured to escape observation, and neither to see nor be seen : they spoke in a low tone, never stopt in the streets, never directed their eyes to a Frank ; they even avoided meeting each other, or asking questions which would have called forth none but answers of sorrow. Civil life, however, seemed to have resumed its usual course ; the shops were open, the artificers were at work, yet they were ever on the watch ; the instant any unusual noise was heard, each hastened to barricade his house, and no townsman was ever seen to run to the aid of a neighbour who implored his assistance.

Soissons, the end of Felix's journey, where he arrived on the third day, had for six years been under the rule of the Franks, its inhabitants were, consequently, more resigned to their fate than those of Paris ; the police, moreover, was better regulated by the victorious army, justice was more easily obtained in cases of oppression, and wrongs were more surely redressed. Commerce was enlivened by the presence of the king, his chief officers, those who had enriched themselves by the plunder of the provinces, and all who wished to gain the favour of the new monarch ; the merchants were content, the

streets were filled with litters, horses, and servants; and though in many palaces the marks of recent devastation might still be observed, other inhabitants had taken the place of those whom war had cut off, and a new luxury had succeeded to that of the ruined families who had been driven from their houses.

At no great distance from the palace of Count Syagrius, then the residence of Clovis, was the habitation assigned by the king to Julius Severus; there it was that Felix was expected, and there he alighted. The original owners had been murdered or compelled to fly; no one cared for their fate, and yet he who but lately had seen the Franks plunder his palace, accepted, without scruple, of those same Franks, another palace and other furniture not less splendid, which these conquerors disposed of according to what they called the right of conquest.

Julius Severus received Felix with attic gracefulness, with all the politeness of an experienced courtier; his expressions were full of gratitude, his manners shewed the pleasure he felt in receiving so illustrious a guest, the son of his dear friend and his benefactor. His conversation was rendered singularly agreeable by an elegance of language, a delicacy and precision in all his expressions, an art of penetrating the

thoughts and feelings of those he addressed, and conforming to them by anticipation; to this he added a perfect knowledge of mankind, which enriched his remarks with novelty and truth. His features were noble, his countenance open; his hair, and his beard, which, contrary to the usual custom, he wore long, were white, though he was not advanced in years. He wore the toga, and looking on him one might have fancied he was an ancient Roman senator descending from the Capitol.

Nevertheless the frankness which appeared imprinted on his countenance and the seeming carelessness of his conversation, did not lead him to commit himself by using expressions he had not previously considered and duly weighed; in his politeness there was no more than the surface of cordiality, and his eloquence was never animated by sincerity. At a first interview his object was to please, to flatter, and, if possible to obtain some power over the person he addressed; this ascendancy when once gained, he preserved with most men for ever; but those who possessed real frankness and honesty, were not long before they began to suspect they should never penetrate to the real man through the cloak of the courtier.

Julius Severus, after reading his daughter's

letters, of which Felix was the bearer, desired him to detail all he had heard of the flight from Chartres, and all he had himself done at the pass of the Loire. He interrupted him to express his gratitude and his admiration of what he called the heroism of Felix; then again he questioned him. He afterwards entered into the most minute circumstances respecting the two conferences of Felix with Numerianus and Volusianus. He listened with such fixed attention, he knew so well the character and dived so deeply into the thoughts of men, and when he spoke of his own plans, of the negotiations he had commenced, and the correspondence he had kept up, it was with such an unstudied appearance of openness, that Felix, charmed by the contemplation of an understanding so elegant and refined, thought he had learnt much from him; nor until he had brought to his recollection all that had passed, did he perceive that Julius Severus had, in fact, told him no more than he already knew. What had appeared to him so novel, consisted not in facts, but rather in philosophy applied to politics. Severus had the talent of generalizing his ideas and ascending from facts to principles, in order afterwards to descend from principles to individuals; he presented constant exercise to the mind, a suc-

cession of ideas ever rich, ever ingenious; but he revealed nothing respecting present circumstances, the knowledge of which he kept to himself alone.

It was agreed, that on the following day, Julius Severus should introduce Felix to Clovis, and explain to him the offers of the Gallic cities, Felix had express orders to communicate with the archbishop of Rheims, should he be at Soissons, and to act only in concert with him. From the representation given to him of the religion of Severus, he expected the latter would have wished to prevent his seeing the prelate; he was agreeably surprised when the senator offered to conduct him to the palace of St. Remy; when he appeared to converse confidentially with the archbishop, as though they agreed in their plans. We ask permission of our readers to be absent from the conference of these grave personages, where nothing was treated of but state affairs, which, in these days, would be totally uninteresting.

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CHAP. IX.

THE KING OF THE FRANKS.

"We take leave of thee, O king; but since thou wilt not restore to thy nephew the towns that belong to him, we warn thee that the axe which struck off the heads of thy brothers, is not yet destroyed, and more easily still shall it cause thine to fall."—*Gregory of Tours, lib. vii. cap. 14. p. 298.*

THE day before the calends of October, Felix was conducted with great ceremony to the audience of Clovis. The palace inhabited by the king of the Franks, possessed all the elegance and majesty of Roman architecture in its best age; but the luxury and refinement of the ancient masters of the world formed a strange contrast with the rude disorder of the new conquerors. Couches covered with Persian carpets, tinged with the richest colours, were placed around the apartments instead of chairs; but as these were not sufficient for the soldiers who kept guard in the anti-chamber, bundles of

straw were strewed about the floor, on which several soldiers were carelessly sitting or lying, while the greatest personages of the state were crossing the hall to approach the throne. The ceilings were adorned with magnificent frescoes, painted by the best masters; but, as if to compete with them in skill, the Franks had drawn on the walls with charcoal the figure of Hermansul. Curtains of the finest texture, decorating the windows, served to temper the glare of day; but one of these having been torn down, a soldier's mantle supplied its place. In the hall of the throne, where Clovis was expected, the spectator might have fancied he saw a deputation from the senate of Rome, so great was the number of Gallic lords, wearing the toga, who assumed the titles of senator, patrician, and count; for since the reign of Constantine, this last title was given to the governors of cities and their dependencies in the Roman empire. The patricians of the enslaved empire came to bow before the king of the Franks, but while waiting for his entrance, they endeavoured to raise their dignity by an affected tone of loftiness towards their inferiors, and by the strict etiquette with which they measured out their mutual compliments,

Numerous prelates, the archbishop of Rheims,

the bishop of Soissons, and the abbots of several monasteries, were to be seen in the crowd. Each was accompanied by a retinue of priests; each sought to insure respect by displaying the pomp of his pontifical vestments in this pagan court, where several priests of the Franks, worshippers of the gods of Germany, were mingled with them.

In the peaceful throng of courtiers were seen many Franks clothed in armour. Some raised to dignity or enriched by plunder, exhibited in their dress the gold and silks they had won by the sword; others wore mantles of the coarsest texture, or the unshorn skins of sheep. But, though their rank and their dress might differ, the fierceness of their looks was the same in all, and shewed they knew neither fear nor respect. They did not enter into conversation, nor even speak to each other, unless they had something of importance to communicate; then their tone of voice was loud and firm. The Gauls addressed each other in whispers, as if they were apprehensive of disturbing the counsels of the prince; the Franks, on the contrary, appeared to think of themselves alone, careless of annoying others by their vociferation, which might even reach the ears of the king.

Clovis at length made his appearance; he was twenty-six years of age; his demeanour

was haughty and majestic; his stature lofty, and his features those of the people to whom he belonged; for, in barbarous races, the character of physiognomy is rather national than individual; he was distinguished from the other Franks by his long hair, which hung on his shoulders: this was the distinctive mark of the royal race, which Clovis wore in common with a great number of chieftains, all of them, like himself, descendants of the great Meroveus. From these the soldiers had the privilege of electing the commander they chose to obey. He who was unsuccessful rarely escaped the poniard of his more fortunate competitor.

Felix was presented to Clovis, and graciously received; his letters of credence were handed to Aurelianus, the Latin confidant of the king of the Franks, who was employed in his most important affairs. Felix explained, in a general manner, the nature of his mission, avoiding every allusion to subjects which might compromise the interests of the inhabitants to the south of the Loire with the Visigoths.

Several Roman senators then spoke; they expressed their joy at seeing the sway of Clovis extending daily over the Gauls, being convinced that henceforth the illustrious Clovis would consider himself not only the king of the Franks,

but also their consul or patrician, and the representative of imperial majesty in Gaul.

St. Remy spoke in his turn, reminding the king that religion alone could give stability to empires; that religion alone could unite Clovis to his people, and place him upon a throne far more elevated than that which he could gain by the battleaxe of war. He declared that the God of the Christians had called Clovis from the forests of Toxandria; that he stretched forth his arms to receive him; that he asked of him only the homage of his heart, and would in return ensure to him victory over all his enemies; in this life would shower on his head the blessings of prosperity and happiness, and in the life to come would crown him with eternal bliss.

Clovis encouraged the hopes of his Roman subjects, and listened with pleasure to the expressions of respect made by these great personages: he appeared to be pleased with their adulation, and to feel how much more his pride would be gratified by their servile obedience, than by the haughty independence of his own Franks. The prophecies of St. Remy appeared in some measure the developement of his own schemes; his reply to the archbishop was expressive of deference and respect; and whether he yielded to conviction or to political prudence, it

was easy to discover he already inclined towards the new religion. Clovis spoke Latin with fluency: the Franks admitted into the council were not such perfect masters of the language, and therefore took no share in the debate, although they sometimes interrupted the speakers by sarcastic observations in their own tongue, which were received by their countrymen with loud bursts of laughter.

At length the Frank Theodoric raised his voice, "I do not well understand what these priests of the conquered mean," said he: "they come in the name of their God, and offer us a victory they could not obtain for themselves: neither do I see the drift of these commanders of unvalled cities and defenceless provinces, who attempt to dictate conditions to us, though their swords never drew blood. If they want a consul, or a patrician, let them choose him among those who wear the toga; if they can, let them elect one who has not yet learnt to run away. For our part, when we chose a king, it was not to make peace, it was to wage war; we chose him to divide among us the possessions of these people, for it is fit the property of cowards should pass to the brave. As for thee, Clovis, remember, thy duty is to lead us on to battle,

“not to give pledges to our enemies. If thou
“preferest peace before war, begone, we shall
“not want for chieftains, the long-haired race
“of kings is not yet extinct: but forget not that
“the battleaxe of the Frank has more than
“once made the head of him who negotiated
“with the foe to roll in the dust.”

This speech was received with shouts of joy by all the Franks present at the assembly; they did not confine themselves to noisy acclamation, but unsheathing their sabres, clashed them in the air, and struck them against their bucklers, making the din of war resound through the hall. The senators and the priests crept into corners, and terrified, huddled together, apprehensive that the Franks might pass from threats to deeds by a sudden massacre of the first Gauls that fell in their way.

When the tumult had in some measure subsided, Clovis addressed the Franks; but as he wished to be understood by them only, he spoke in the Teutonic tongue: “My noble Franks,” said he, “never have ye yet seen me to flinch in
“the fight, or appear wearied with warfare.
“Never have ye seen me restrain your hands
“from plunder, which you shared among your-
“selves. I have contented myself with glo-
“riously bathing in the blood of my enemies,

“ and spreading a feast to the crows, while our
“ ancestors looked down on us, and rejoiced in
“ the walthalla. No other reward do I claim for
“ myself; to you I abandon all the wealth of
“ these slaves. But Hermansul himself contents
“ not prudence; we must combat our foes one
“ after the other, not altogether.”

“ But one year has elapsed since you con-
“ quered the Tongrians; know you whether
“ their allies of Thuringia will not come to
“ avenge them? The Germans eye us with
“ jealousy; the Burgundians and the Visigoths
“ were established in Gaul before we, let us take
“ advantage of the riches of these Romans to
“ raise ourselves above our other enemies; they
“ themselves shall not hereafter escape us. My
“ noble Franks, leave to me the cares of policy,
“ I will reserve battles enough for you; then
“ will you know whether the sight of flowing
“ gore gladdens not my heart as much as your
“ own.”

The words of Clovis calmed the fury of the Franks, and when he ceased to speak, he was applauded with as much clamour as Theodoric. Among the Romans who were present, many understood the Teutonic language, and could therefore discover that even in their presence Clovis had pledged himself to deceive them; but

they had not the courage to face their dangerous situation. They preferred the opinion that Clovis was dissembling with his Franks; and that he was obliged to adopt deceitful measures in order to bring them to his views; they hoped the struggle between the two nations would be finally decided by the arts of intrigue; and in these arts they were as certain of superiority, as in battle the Franks were of victory.

Clovis was anxious to dismiss the assembly; he ordered the stirrup-cup to be brought in; for the Franks never quitted the palace of the king without taking refreshment. A goblet was given to each lord. When the cup-bearer offered one to Theodoric, the cautious Frank rejected it. Clovis observing this, instantly took the bowl, drank of it, and then handed it to Theodoric, who now, without apprehension, drank off its contents. Not a word passed between the two; but the silent scene escaped not the eye of Felix. He saw that the horrid art of poisoning was not less known in the camp of the Franks than in the court of Constantinople; but the barbarian shewed his mistrust in a more open manner, and the monarch appeared less offended at the suspicion.

The Franks had already retired, and the Gauls, whose motions were more stately, began,

in their turn, to leave the hall of audience; Julius Severus, also, was on the point of departure, when Clovis desired him to remain. "Has this ambassador of the Gauls brought your daughter with him?" said he, looking at Felix.

"Most noble sire, it was not possible —"

"Then let her be conducted to Soissons as soon as possible."

This order, heard by all who remained in the room, excited a lively emotion in more than one breast. Felix thought the fate of Julia was fixed, ere he had been able to make an attempt to save her, and at a time when he could not even foresee the possibility of affording her protection. Severus, on the other hand, saw his schemes unfolded to the public, before they were ripe for execution. St. Remy felt that the jealousy manifested by the Franks had urged Clovis to reject the wife offered to him by the priests: this lady was a Roman, of a family entirely devoted to the hierarchy, and which owed its honours to that attachment alone. The prelate was the first to speak.

"Most noble sovereign," said he, "in our sacred books we read that the king Ahasuerus placed agents in all the provinces of his empire, whose office it was to assemble the young

“and beauteous virgin, and to conduct them to
 “Shushan, his capital. When decked with befit-
 “ting ornaments they were presented to the king,
 “and she who had the good fortune to please
 “him, was declared queen. If your excellency
 “would vouchsafe to choose in the same manner
 “among the Roman daughters, our bishops
 “would present to you none but virgins, in
 “whom the beauty of the soul should outshine
 “that of the body.”

“Is Ahasuerus one of your prophets,” said
 Clovis, “or is he one of the saints of the hea-
 “venly host?”

“No,” replied St. Remy, “he was like your
 “excellency, a mighty king, who protected the
 “people of the Lord.”

“Ahasuerus was not the commander of Franks;
 “they would despise me were I to mix an igno-
 “ble blood with that of Meroveus: were I to
 “receive a consort from the priests of the
 “Christian God, they would reject me. You
 “have just heard the threats of Theodoric.”

“If your excellency fear to offend the pre-
 “judices of the Franks; if you refuse the pious
 “Deuteria, niece to the bishop of Meaux, whose
 “personal charms, doubtless, entitle her to a
 “crown in this world, as do her shining virtues
 “to one in heaven, still may you, O king, find

“ among the Romans a spouse of noble blood,
“ not allied to the priests of the Lord. But
“ forget not that your empire can be founded
“ only on the protection of the Most High, and
“ with regard to human prudence, only on the
“ confidence of your Gaulish subjects, who are
“ infinitely more numerous than your Frank
“ soldiers. Hear now, mighty king, the voice
“ of truth—that confidence you never will gain
“ if you take a spouse from the hands of bar-
“ barian kings, all of whom are either pagans,
“ or what is still worse, heretics. We hope the
“ consort you shall choose will be pleasing both
“ to your heart and to your eyes; but may she
“ be a Christian—may she be orthodox, or soon
“ will your throne fall as we before have seen
“ the throne of Attila to fall !”

“ Priest,” replied Clovis, “ you speak only of
“ the Gauls that attend your temples; but there
“ are many others who have remained faithful
“ to the religion of Rome. These tell me that
“ the gods of the Germans and those of the
“ Capitol are the same, though they bear differ-
“ ent names. They tell me they have long been
“ oppressed by you; they will applaud their
“ liberator, if he permit them to open their
“ temples once more: they tell me they will serve
“ him with unshaken fidelity; nay, they will

“even recruit his armies; for Armorica, the
“only part of Gaul now peopled with valiant
“soldiers, is almost wholly inhabited by the
“worshippers of the ancient gods.”

Severus, though present, took no share in this conversation; he fashioned his countenance so as to appear inattentive and uninterested; St. Remy had not the same power over his feelings: at various intervals, and particularly while the king was speaking, he eyed Severus with a look of mingled indignation and contempt, as though he recognized his counsels in the speech of Clovis. After a short pause he exclaimed—
“Remember this, at least, O king; among the
“orthodox there is one name more hateful than
“that of idolater; more hateful even than that
“of heretic, I mean that of apostate.” Having said these words, he departed accompanied by his priests.

“I see,” said Severus, with great coolness,
“that your excellency, in the study of man,
“has learnt to take advantage of the impetuous
“temper of those who approach you. Neither
“has the ferocious violence of Theodoric, nor
“the overbearing intolerance of St. Remy, been
“able to disturb the tranquillity of your soul.
“But while you moderated their fury, you duly
“appreciated the character both of themselves,

“ and the bodies to which they belong. A king
“ can scarcely be called a king as long as he is
“ governed by the threats of an insolent sol-
“ diery; he is still less worthy of that title, when
“ he allows priests to rule his thoughts and ac-
“ tions, and to become his lawgivers. When
“ your excellency sees St. Remy, you can never
“ forget what Ambrosius was to Theodosius.”

“ Clovis wields the sword,” replied the king,
“ and in proper time and place he will use it to
“ strike down those who resist him. Neither
“ Roman nor barbarian shall make me tremble
“ nor delay the execution of my designs; tell
“ that to your Gauls—but” he added, with an
emotion that seemed the shuddering of terror,
“ it is against men I war, not against the gods—
“ not against the gods; them I respect, them I
“ fear, whether in the forests of Germany, in
“ the mouldering temples of Jupiter, or in the
“ new-built churches. Their dread power sur-
“ rounds us, binds us on all sides; their priests
“ bring us from on high orders to which
“ kings and nations must bow. Wherefore do
“ those priests wage war against each other?
“ Wherefore do they leave us in doubt? Let
“ me but understand them, and my battle-are
“ shall obey the true sovereign of heaven! Let
“ me but know in what gods I am to believe,

“and the blood they demand shall flow on their
“altars.”

Severus, Felix, and the few other Romans present, remained some moments in silence. They fancied they could see the internal struggles of his rude, untutored mind, in which the spirit of fanaticism had not been extinguished either by the intrigues of politics, by the fury of war, nor even by a faith wavering between opposite creeds. They foresaw with dread that as soon as Clovis made his election he would become a persecutor; and they could not yet determine whether the persecution would be directed against themselves or against their adversaries. Severus, however, prepared to speak, wishing, apparently, to give a new impulse to his vacillating mind; but Clovis, who had for some time appeared wrapt in meditation, raised his eyes on the Romans and made a sign for them to withdraw.

CHAP. X.

RESIDENCE AT SOISSONS.

“ Divine Providence hath found in you the moderator of the age ; by choosing the good side you have insured justice to all. Your faith is our victory.”—*The Letter of St. Avitus, bishop of Vienne, to Clovis, on his Conversion. Apud Sirmond. Concil. Gallic. vol. i. p. 153.*

“ AND will you really send for Julia Severa ?” said Felix to Severus as they retired.

“ You see I have no choice,” replied he ; “ I shall, however, endeavour to gain some delay. It becomes neither the dignity of my daughter nor my own, that she should be here awaiting the result of such scenes as we have just witnessed. Indeed I cannot at the present moment escort her hither, and it would be indecorous were she to travel alone, or under the protection of any other man. I shall find an opportunity of saying this to Clovis.”

“ The confidence with which she has vouch-

“safed to honour me, and your friendship, embolden me,” said Felix, “to speak of that, which, after the conversation we have just heard, can no longer remain a secret. In the delay and excuses with which you oppose the eager haste of Clovis, I perceive the noble pride of a Roman, and the tender affection of a good father.” Julius Severus frowned; Felix, however, determined not to take the hint, but at once to declare what were his feelings respecting the threatened fate of Julia.

“Yes,” continued he, “as your friend, as your guest, as a Roman senator, I will venture to tell you that the union of one of the most illustrious daughters of Rome with a barbarian will meet with our most decided disapprobation. The laws which held to shame such a marriage, though no longer in force, are still remembered: the policy of the Cæsars has at times caused them to be infringed by the marriage of their own daughters, but never has a senator followed their example.”

“The empire,” replied Severus, “has fallen; the sovereignty has passed over to the barbarians, and in all ages worldly honours have followed power.”

“The Republic still lives in the heart of all Romans; we hope it may once more flourish;

“and we should place our glory in preserving
“customs worthy of the toga.”

“Even should the Republic flourish again,
“the daughter of Severus cannot be blamed
“for following the example of the daughter of
“Theodosius.”

“The captive Placidia did indeed marry
“Adolphus; may her example be a warning to
“every Roman woman tempted to marry a bar-
“barian king. The unfortunate lady saw the
“six children of her husband, the issue of a
“former marriage, murdered in her presence;
“confounded among a crowd of vulgar captives,
“she was compelled to march on foot over a
“miry road above twelve miles, before the horse
“of a barbarian, the assassin of her husband.
“Is not the axe ever suspended over the heads
“of such kings? Do not the threats of Theo-
“doric we heard this very morning accord with
“our experience? In the short course of my life
“how many kings of the Burgundians, the Visi-
“goths, the Suevi, and the Vandals, have I seen
“massacred by their own relatives? Know we
“not that of all these nations the Franks are
“the most cruel and treacherous? Should we
“not then tremble for the fate of her who shall
“unite her hand with that of one of their
“kings?”

“The most exalted situations are, indeed,
“exposed to the greatest dangers. The life of
“the Caesars at Rome and at Constantinople
“was not exposed to peril less imminent. In
“these days even the most ignoble citizen is
“equally insecure. Ask of the fugitives from
“Chartres; ask of the exiled owners of these
“palaces, what has the renouncing of ambition
“availed them?”

“Ambition aspires to an exalted rank; but
“he who seeks for true glory will despise the
“power gained by plunder only.”

“Conquest and plunder are names we give
“in turn to the same things, according as we
“wish to exalt or depreciate the conqueror. But
“the long-haired kings, descended from Mero-
“veus, are not mere soldiers of fortune; their
“race is as illustrious as their achievements are
“brilliant.”

“With a Roman their celebrity began on the
“day that the great Constantine threw their
“ancestors before the wild beasts in the Circus,
“amid the acclamations of the assembled mul-
“titude. Heaven grant their abominable race
“may end as it began!”

“No, no, with the Romans their celebrity
“began by the brilliant achievements of Mello-
“baudes and Arbogastes, at the head of our

“own armies. With a Frank it begins still
“higher, and the songs of their bards celebrate
“the numberless victories they won in the forests
“of Germany.”

“I see not the glory of an ancient origin,
“when it presents to the mind nothing more
“than the ravages and plunder of former days,
“and a continued outrage on human nature.”

“This hatred towards the Franks ill agrees
“with the mission you have undertaken at the
“court of Clovis, nay, I cannot see the ten-
“dency of this impassioned language;—this
“friendly advice you are pleased to give me,
“on what, after all, is improbable, and even
“undecided in my own mind.”

Felix blushed, he felt he had gone too far, and
hesitating a moment, he saw that instead of re-
treating, it was necessary he should advance still
farther. “You are right,” said he, “it was
“presumption in me to give such advice, but it
“cannot be presumption to plead in my own
“cause for that on which my happiness depends.
“I love your daughter; I even solicit your con-
“sent to our union, how then can I bear a rival
“in this barbarian, this enemy to my country,
“to all I hold most dear?”

“Your request honours my daughter and my
family” replied Severus, gravely, “and it is not

“necessary for me to say, that under any other
“circumstances, I should have acceded to it
“joyfully. But you see the situation I am
“placed in: my estate lies on the borders of
“the country invaded by the Franks; my house
“has been ransacked; my cattle carried off, my
“slaves dispersed, and my peasants driven away.
“Clovis seems inclined to favour me; to restore
“my wealth and honours, now entirely under
“his controul. On the other hand, he may
“instantly, if he choose, complete my downfall.
“To-day motives of policy induce him to seek
“for a consort among the Romans; to-morrow,
“perhaps, he may wish to unite himself to the
“family of one of those barbarian kings, who
“share our provinces. The different factions
“which have arisen in his court, reckoning on
“the influence a young wife would acquire over
“a man so passionately fond of women, are in-
“dustriously intriguing in order to direct his
“choice according to their own views. You
“see, and the fact I do not deny, one of these
“factions fixes on my daughter. You shall
“yourself judge whether, in such a predicament,
“it would be prudent in me to take upon myself
“the prevention of a marriage which Clovis
“must consider as a great honour done to my
“family. Another in my situation would, per-

“ haps, have sent for Julia, without hesitation,
“ that she might by her beauty dispute a throne,
“ which will probably be given to her who is
“ most pleasing in the eyes of the conqueror. I
“ think the respect I owe to the feelings of my
“ daughter compels me to act differently. I know
“ she has an antipathy to this union. At the
“ beginning of our conversation, you approved
“ of my conduct so far. Indeed common pru-
“ dence, in my opinion, will not allow me to do
“ more.”

Felix felt embarrassed, and could not readily reply. The arguments Julius Severus had brought forward were so plausible that it was difficult even for a lover to oppose them. Yet, in the bottom of his heart he suspected, that Julius Severus was much more eagerly inclined to the alliance of his daughter with the king than he wished to appear, and that the delay he so much boasted of proceeded from his having as yet devised no convenient mode of bringing her to Soissons. Felix, however, contented himself with approving this delay as more suited to female dignity, and then quitted his host with a heart overwhelmed by grief and melancholy forebodings.

On the following days Felix had several conferences with Clovis, his secretary Aurelianus,

and St. Remy. He experienced numerous difficulties in the negotiation he had undertaken. Clovis had for some time kept up a secret correspondence with Volusianus, with Avitus, the bishop of Vienne, and with the prelates of the central part of Gaul, who were the most zealous champions of orthodoxy. He had persuaded them he was on the point of embracing their religion, and thus insured their assistance in a projected attack on the king of the Visigoths. Clovis, however, had not yet strength proportioned to the vastness of his ambition. Although Alarie the Second, the youthful son of Earic, reigning at Toulouse, was not of an age to hold the reins of government, the Visigoth lords of his council were determined to prevent Clovis from extending his dominions beyond the northern bank of the Loire. Clovis was therefore now seeking to gain time; to defer a change of religion, which might alienate the loyalty of the Franks; to avoid a public treaty with the archbishop of Tours, which would have brought upon him the vengeance of the Visigoths; to flatter the pagans of Gaul, whose secret hopes he cherished by the means of Julius Severus; in short to displease no one, promising every thing and performing nothing.

Felix fancied he could penetrate the policy of

the Frank king, and believed he had discovered the cause of the apparent inconsistency in his behaviour. Deep dissimulation appeared to be the leading feature in the character of this barbarian hero; nor was he induced to give up his opinion by the frequent paroxysms of rage to which Clovis was subject. In the midst of his most violent bursts of fury, the king of the Franks advanced steadily towards his aim, and when Felix saw him in outward appearance so entirely mastered by his passions, but in reality so skilled in doing and saying what best suited his purpose, he frequently surmised that his rage was intended to terrify, to deceive the spectators with regard to his real designs, or to serve as an excuse for the crimes his policy demanded, and which would have appeared too atrocious had they been committed in cool blood.

That which most astonished Felix in these suspected artifices, was their power to deceive old courtiers, hoary politicians, and prelates deeply versed in the arts of intrigue. The fact was, he observed and studied the man dispassionately, whereas the others were blinded by personal interest. Remy, Volusianus, Avitus, and the other bishops, thought of nothing but the triumph of orthodoxy. They judged all political events by the importance they them-

selves attached to ecclesiastical matters. Instead of suspecting that Clovis masked his real intentions, they attributed his procrastination and subterfuges to the machinations of heretics and idolaters. Suspicion of Julius Severus, which had long rankled in the breasts of the prelates, was now greatly augmented, and the letters of Volusianus to St. Remy were filled with forebodings of the dire consequences to be expected from the union of the king of the Franks with the daughter of the infidel senator of Chartres.

Another negotiation which had commenced at Soissons at the same time with that of Felix Florentius, tended greatly to increase the credit of Julius Severus, and equally to excite mistrust on the part of St. Remy and his colleagues. Joel, deputed from Armorica, had arrived with a numerous suite, composed partly of savage Osismians, the inhabitants of Cornwall, the western extremity of the Armorican peninsula; partly of emigrants from the large island of Britain, whom the conquests and devastations of the Saxons had forced from their native land. These two nations spoke the same language, professed the same religion, and preserved the same manners: and the Britons, who came with their families to seek an asylum in Armorica,

gave to that part of Gaul the name of Britany, which it still preserves.

The inhabitants of Soissons viewed with astonishment this half-wild race of men, strangers to all the refinements of social life, and addicted to no intemperance: they were always armed with long swords and poniards, which they were ever ready to use with a skill seldom found even in the best-trained soldier. Their lofty stature, their agility, their prodigious strength of body, their intrepid contempt of death, astonished the Gauls of Soissons; but at the same time flattered their pride, for these western Celts were the representatives of the race of their ancestors, and such in former days were the men who peopled Gaul, before long thralldom had debased their character.

Several of the Franks in their revels had met with the Britons who followed Joel; and the foreign barbarians had often had quarrels with those of the country, which generally ended in single combats. But the superior skill and bodily strength of the Armoricans had given them the victory in almost every one of these contests. Among barbarians bravery is, of all qualities, the one most respected, and these different combats had imprinted on the Franks

feelings of respect and affection for the Armoricans.

The negotiations Julius Severus had formerly carried on with the Armoricans brought him acquainted with all the chieftains of that country. It was to him Joel addressed himself on his arrival at Soissons, and it was through him he communicated with Clovis. Joel had come to negotiate a confederacy between the Franks and the Armoricans on a footing of perfect equality; he offered to Clovis the support of a numerous and brave army; no negotiation could be of greater importance to the Frank king, and when concluded, none contributed more to the extension of his power. Julius Severus, to whom Clovis had confided the business of tranquilizing the suspicions of the Armoricans, and demanding the necessary pledges in order to bring the treaty to a happy conclusion, was become the most important person in the court of the Franks; and St. Remy began to despair of the conversion of a monarch whom he knew he should be obliged to obey.

Clovis had seen Deuteria, niece to the bishop of Meaux, and she did not please him; he had shewn a repugnance for the other Roman maidens, who had been presented to him by the priests; but his curiosity was excited by the ab-

sence of Julia Severa, and the unwillingness of her father to bring her to the court of Soissons. He had spoken of her at different times; he had desired to see her portrait, and he appeared decided in his preference of her before all others.

Alarm now filled the minds of all the orthodox prelates of Gaul. They had for some time considered the conversion of Clovis as certain,—the only event that could render their faith triumphant. Should the king of the Franks escape them, it was to be expected that the idolatry of the Germans, and of some of the Gauls, or the Arianism of the Visigoths and the Burgundians, would become the only reigning religion. Of these two creeds it would be difficult to say which was most hated by these priests. They stood on the very brink of ruin, when fortunately St. Avitus, the archbishop of Vienne, proposed to St. Remy, the archbishop of Rheims, the union of Clovis with Clotilda, daughter to Chilperic, and niece of the Burgundian king. This last sovereign, named Gondebaud, had murdered the father of the princess; he had also condemned her brothers and sisters to a violent death. Herself he kept in exile and poverty. But in her banishment, being removed far from the presence of her uncle, she had been educated by the priests in the orthodox faith of

her father; and to the hatred of Gondebaud's Arian tenets, she added a passionate desire of revenge, fostered in her breast against the oppressor of her family. The triumph of her faith and the destruction of all infidels constituted her sole aim. Her implicit obedience to the ministers of the altar; her ardent zeal, her enthusiasm, her firm perseverance, which misfortune had not shaken, and which prosperity could not seduce, adapted her peculiarly to the views of the pontiffs, who were so anxious for the conversion of Clovis. It was asserted that her beauty was incomparable, and that the youthful conqueror, who had always shewn himself an ardent admirer of the fair sex, could not resist her charms.

She was of royal birth, a circumstance of considerable importance, inasmuch as it would flatter the pride of Clovis, and the prejudices of his Franks, who would have seen with disgust a descendant of Meroveus united with the daughter of a subject. As Clovis appeared to have some inclination for the daughter of Julius Severus, the prelates, dreading that alliance, were obliged to abandon the idea of marrying the king of the Franks to a Roman female; and they skilfully took advantage of his own prejudices and those of his soldiers, to secure a

Felix obtained his audience of leave on the ides of October.

The next day Felix departed for Noviliacum, overwhelmed with grief. In all he had undertaken for his country he had succeeded; but he had failed in all he had attempted for himself, or for her who had thrown herself upon his protection with so much confidence. He shuddered at the fate reserved for Julia, when they should be separated for ever. He shuddered at the idea of an exaltation combined with such dreadful danger; at the idea of Julia's being subjected to a barbarous husband, whom he thought capable of the most enormous atrocities. His connection with her, it was true, had existed a few days only: communion of feeling between them had just commenced, but that first intercourse portended for futurity the most tender attachment, perhaps the most ardent affection. Various occurrences, by hurrying him to a decision, had induced him, perhaps prematurely, to speak to her of love, and to her father of marriage. He was not even certain that Julia felt more than grateful confidence towards him; he therefore anxiously desired to see her, in order to discover the true state of her affections. With regard to his future proceedings,

he wished to consult the feelings of Julia, and not his own. If she possessed sufficient courage, if she neither dreaded the power of a king, nor the anger of a father; if she felt for him somewhat more than a mere preference, both were still free, both were still the arbiters of their own destiny. But though he was prepared to venture all in her service, yet he was determined to leave the means to her decision.

CHAP. XI.

THE FEDERATES.

“ The federate Frank, admitted to live under the protection of our laws, hath cultivated our fields; and all the desert tracks near Amiens, Beauvais, Troies, and Langres, have once more been clothed with verdure, under the hands of a barbarian husbandman.”—*The Panegyric of Constantine by Eumenius, c. 21.*

JULIA SEVERA felt a regret for the departure of Felix from Noviliacum beyond what she even durst confess to herself. She had no doubt of his ardent zeal in the defence of the interests of his country, but she well knew that in the present unhappy state of Gaul, when not a hope of safety or of glory remained to the Romans, and when no choice was left them but of the humiliation they would submit to; a patriot might serve his country with fidelity, but not with enthusiasm: in such times the good citizen fulfilled his duty when he was compelled to appear on the theatre of politics, but did not seek for an opportunity of bringing himself forward.

Should Felix Florentius, by treating with Clovis, succeed in rescuing the defenceless cities of Gaul from the pillage and slaughter of a barbarous army, he would certainly perform an important service to his countrymen: that negotiation, however, was necessarily very unpleasant to his feelings; and as no other lord was likely to undertake a mission in which the labour would be requited by no profit, his offer had been accepted with proportionate eagerness by Volusianus. Julia, therefore, felt some pride, and still more gratitude, in the thought that it was for her and her alone Felix had ventured to face the insolent arrogance of the barbarian king, and to wrestle with him in the arts of political intrigue; that it was for her he had quitted Noviliacum, and that after having, at the pass of the Loire, saved her from death, or what was still more dreadful, from captivity, he had volunteered his services as the saviour of her fortune and the protector of her father. In him she placed her hope, her trust, for the completion of her wishes. She was certain Felix, who had prevented her becoming the captive of the barbarian, would never suffer her to become his wife.

Felix had sent letters to his mother by the different couriers despatched to the cities which

he represented at Soissons. He had given her an account of his reception by Severus, and his presentation to Clovis ; but did not think himself authorised to mention Julia's impending fate. The secret belonged to her alone ; and he felt no inclination to divulge it. According to the manners of the ancients, it would not have been decorous in Felix to write to Julia ; he consequently had no means of clearing up the uncertainty in which her destiny had so long been enveloped.

Julia, it is true, read the letters Felix addressed to his mother ; she studied them in order to discover what might lie concealed under his expressions. She remarked in them a character of melancholy depression, that ill accorded with the success which crowned his negotiation. This melancholy sometimes excited sorrowful forebodings : could she, however, attribute it to any other cause than his absence from her ? Surely not, for when she consulted her own heart, she felt conscious that had she written to him, although animated by the hopes of youth, a spirit of melancholy would have pervaded her letters.

Sylvia had never spoken to Julia of the projects she had formed for Felix ; never would she wound the delicacy of her feelings by hazarding

even an allusion to the subject. Her affection for her, however, appeared daily to increase; she seemed to demand in return, not the common friendship that binds the guest to his host, but that tender confidence, that filial affection, which can exist only between the wife and the mother of a beloved son. Sylvia sought in her youthful friend those qualities to which she trusted for the future happiness of her child. Perhaps had she thought of herself alone, she would not have wished for the society of a person endowed with an imagination so brilliant, feelings so delicate, and a vivacity so playful. Mature age delights in repose, and the prerogatives of youth are often irksome at this period of life; but Sylvia fancied she saw the approach of the moment when the imagination of her adopted daughter would gently transport into the regions of poesy the heart of her son, disgusted with the world; when her bosom would receive as a sacred deposit, all the silent sufferings of Felix; and when her sprightly gaiety would dissipate the clouds that hung over his soul.

On the other hand, Julia, who had long since been bereft of her mother, and who had never experienced the delights of filial love mingled with so much respect, yielded to her feelings with enthusiasm; she sought in Sylvia all the features

which resembled Felix: in the mother she *was* delighted with what she durst not confess to herself she adored in the son. Notwithstanding the difference in age and sex, she fancied she could discover the same physiognomy in both: in both were found the same dignity united with mildness, the same fire in the eye, the same smile playing on the lips, and more than all did she admire the similarity in the inflection of their voices; the familiar expressions she had heard from the mouth of Felix, and Felix alone, would at times, when uttered by his mother, cause her heart to thrill with joy.

She sometimes spoke to Sylvia about Felix, although with much timidity; but Sylvia felt such pleasure in talking of her son, he was so entirely the pride of her old age, the consolation of her heart, that little artifice was required to turn the conversation on her favourite subject. Julia, therefore, soon learnt all she wished to know, but durst not ask, touching his earliest education, the habits of his infancy, the inclinations of his youth, or the first sparks of sentiment which shone forth in his mind.

With these two friends at Noviliacum, time glided gently by. They found daily new resources in each other's mind; and the character of both, as it developed itself, appeared in a

more favourable light. The two old tutors of Felix, Martin and Eudoxus, who shared their solitude, did not gain so much by more intimate acquaintance. They never shewed their real character without exciting a feeling of disgust; but their minds were cultivated, and communicated a sort of spring to conversation.

Both were very learned; both were very convenient for consultation on a variety of subjects; when their self-love was flattered and they were allowed to take their own course, without contradiction or restraint, some advantage might be derived from their conversation. Sylvia, who justly appreciated the character of these two persons, took care to keep them at a proper distance, although she treated them as a part of her family. She made use of Eudoxus as an excellent dictionary, as a learned but tedious book, which she was glad to have the power of opening when she chose, but which also it was highly necessary to know when to shut, for his awkward pedantry was rather irritating than irksome to her feelings. Martin, who was much less eager to make a display of his learning, and who, perhaps, was rather less vain, but more haughty and arrogant, did not, like Eudoxus, grate the feelings of those he wished to flatter, but only of those he wished to dis-

please, and unfortunately this very frequently occurred.

Martin alone remained insensible to the fascinating manners and demeanour of Julia; nay, he seemed to have taken a dislike to her, which daily increased in spite of the efforts made by the daughter of Severus to gain his good will. In his frequent invectives against philosophers, those men whose minds were corrupted by profane literature, against the idolaters and the infidels, he now appeared to have more than Eudoxus in view: it might have been imagined that his aim was either to mortify Julia, or indirectly to wound her feelings. Sylvia was astonished at this antipathy, but as she had observed Julia in the intimacy of domestic life, and found her religious opinions harmonizing with her own more than those of Martin, she put no question to the priest on the subject, but contented herself with sometimes interposing to repress the acrimony of his zeal.

Julia passed the finest part of the autumn at Noviliacum. Whatever may be the calamities with which the madness of man overwhelms his fellow creatures, the beauties of nature are ever the same at the same seasons of the year; the banks of the Loire, though but lately ravaged by the barbarians, were still a most delightful

residence. The forests did not appear less majestic, nor the verdure of the meads less beautiful, nor the tints of the falling leaves less varied; the streams were not less pure, and the clouds which, in the morning, fled before the sun, or, in the evening, rolled along the western horizon, were not less brilliant in their golden splendour.

The flocks re-crossing the Loire to return to their pastures, whence they had been driven so precipitately by the shepherds, at the approach of the Franks, seemed cheered by the brilliancy of the unclouded sun; they knew not the danger to which they had been exposed, nor that which still threatened them; they saw the present moment only, and gladly answered the call of nature which invited them to joy. The peasants had just finished their vintage, the crop was abundant, and the must which consequently appeared on their board in greater profusion than usual, contributed to drown their cares, and to cause them for once to participate in that cheerfulness which the fine days of autumn never fail to produce throughout the whole range of animal life.

The two friends passed several of these delightful days in visiting the neighbourhood of Noviliacum, and the villages and hamlets comprised in the district of Interamnes. Sylvia felt

pleasure in shewing to Julia an estate of which she hoped one day to see her the mistress. But even had not that motive existed, Sylvia would have considered herself obliged, by the laws of hospitality, to shew any intelligent guest, who might reside under her roof, the many enchanting landscapes which the banks of the Loire presented; the many races, different in manners and customs, dwelling on the large estate of Felix, and the numerous ruins in the neighbourhood, so worthy of curiosity, being the monuments of ancient civilization and religion.

Nothing so much attracted the curiosity of Julia, as the vast ruins of Hesodunum, situate on the northern bank of the Loire, two leagues below Noviliacum. From the castle terrace the towers of Hesodunum were seen sketched in the horizon; the sun set behind the vast buildings, which then took a darker tint, while the sky and land seemed blazing in gold around. As the day fell they augmented to the eye, and seemed to rise in all the majesty of past ages, such as they were at the time the Carnuti and the Turonians disputed their possession; or when the Druids, in their subterraneous caves, held mysterious councils. These remains of a considerable town, which now could not reckon one single inhabitant; these monuments of an-

cient events, of which the memory was not entirely effaced in the province, although they had found no place in the general records of Gaul; the superstitious terror which seemed to be still attached by the people to the dwellings of the sanguinary gods, whose worship was long since abandoned, had often been an object of Julia's questions and Eudoxus' learned dissertations. One whole day was to be passed in visiting Hesodunum; but various domestic incidents had compelled them to defer this long-projected expedition almost to the time when Sylvia expected the return of Felix Florentius.

Meanwhile the two friends visited the banks of the Cher, as they had done those of the Loire. They extended their excursions to the camp of the federates, which presented to them a softened picture of those hordes of barbarians,—those Franks,—among whom Felix, the man who of all others interested them most deeply, was now residing. The camp of the federates was originally formed for fifty veteran barbarians, who had been enriched and half civilized in the Roman armies. Many had already found in the bosom of their family that death they had so often dared in battle; but their wives and their children had inherited their property; their neighbours undertook to

cultivate their fields until the sons of their ancient comrades in arms should be able to provide for the support of their families, so that the colony was apparently in a flourishing state.

It would not have been possible for females to go from Noviliacum to the camp of the federates, and return the same day, without experiencing considerable fatigue, particularly as it was their intention to visit the banks of the Cher in their most romantic points, and to examine minutely the small military colony appointed for their defence. Sylvia, therefore, ordered apartments to be prepared for their reception in an ancient pleasure-house or villa, near the federate camp, which formerly was the residence of a person whose estate had long since been added to that of Florentius. From the name of its ancient proprietor, it was called the castle of Rutilianus. The situation was more wild but less picturesque than that of Noviliacum. It was placed on a rugged hillock between the Cher and a torrent which flowed into the river: two sides of the walls were built upon perpendicular rocks washed by the stream. Some steps hewn in the rock communicated by narrow dark passages to the small harbour where the boats were kept. This was the shortest road to the camp of the federates,

situated on the other side of the torrent, crowning the opposite hillock.

But few durst take advantage of this communication, unless in broad day. More than once it was said lights had been seen about midnight, at the openings which admitted air into the subterraneous passages. The barbarian soldiers, who had brought with them into Gaul their northern superstitions, unknown among the Romans, attributed these lights to supernatural beings. The whole of the castle was by them suspected to be the habitation of mischievous spirits. Thirty years since the former proprietor, Marcus Rutilianus, had been slain, with all his family, by a party of Vandals: his soul, however, would have remained, they said, at peace in its sepulchre, like those of so many others that had fallen under the sword of the enemy, had not domestic treachery been the cause of his destruction. His brother Paulus, according to common report, aided by the wife of Marcus, who loved him, and hoping at the death of his elder brother to inherit his estate, had invited the Vandals, who were ravaging the opposite bank of the Cher, to cross that river: he went for them with his brother's boats; he opened the secret stairs by which, at midnight, he introduced them into the castle, where the

family were sleeping, unconscious of danger; but the Vandals, profiting by the treachery, yet detesting the traitors, slew Paulus and the faithless spouse who shewed them the pass, as well as all the rest of the family of Rutilianus.

To answer in some measure the purposes of expiation, a small chapel, or oratory, had been erected at the foot of the hill, where Paulus had introduced the Vandals into the castle. Its religious services were performed by the priests of St. Martin of Tours, who, on days of great solemnity, came to celebrate mass: thence they could enter the subterraneous passages to expel the demons; but they seldom visited the oratory, and it was supposed still more rarely these subterraneous passages.

On the opposite side the front of the castle commanded an extensive plain, bounded by ancient forests, whose solitary recesses and deep shades excited feelings of a melancholy and awful nature. On the arrival of Sylvia and her young guest, the federates assembled on this plain to honour their benefactress by a festival accompanied with warlike exercises. Sylvia Numantia and the father of Felix had erected convenient dwellings for the veterans; they had given them cattle, grain, and instruments of tillage, and had insured to them a comfortable old

age. The small military colony in return undertook to defend the pass of the Cher, and thus provide for the safety of the whole district of Interamnes. These hoary soldiers seized, therefore, with eagerness, an opportunity of proving to their mistress that they were prepared to perform their duty.

Sylvia had promised prizes to all who should distinguish themselves in these warlike sports, and the plain in front of the castle, on which were assembled all the federates and their families, with several shepherds, hunters, and peasants of the neighbourhood, was, from mid-day to sunset, the theatre of successive mock-combats. The first to try their strength were the sons of the veterans, whom, according to the laws of the empire, the fathers were obliged to instruct in the management of arms. Next came the old soldiers themselves: although their silver locks and their sun-burnt skin, marked the long hardships they had braved, and though many of them were already bent by age, they seemed to recover the vigour of youth when they grasped their ancient weapons. The habitual precision of their movements supplied the place of wasted strength: they darted the javelin to a greater distance, and wielded the battleaxe with greater skill than their sons and pupils whom they had

instructed; and when, to end the sports, a furious bull was driven into the meadow, and pursued by mastiffs of the strongest breed, a veteran awaited his approach without shrinking, and felled him by a single blow.

The women, in their turn, wished to display their skill in military exercise. They were for the most part amazons, who had followed the camp with their husbands for many years, who were accustomed to share with them all hardships and dangers, and who seemed, in truth, better fitted to that wandering and perilous mode of life, than to the enjoyment of domestic happiness. Their lofty stature, their daring step, their bold motions, their rough voice, and the sharp features of their face, might have induced a belief they did not belong to the sex whose garments they wore. After having shewn they could handle the lance and the buckler, the battleaxe and the falchion of their husbands, they contended in the hurling of stones. The first prize was proposed for her who should strike a mark at the distance of two hundred paces: this was the trial of skill. The second prize was to be given to the strongest: a discus of stone, weighing five and twenty pounds, was placed in the hands of the competitors, and she who could heave it to the greatest distance was

to be crowned. Radbode, the matron of the castle, who was the widow of one of the most distinguished soldiers of the little colony, won both prizes; and the veterans, who applauded these different trials of strength and skill, all asserted that the courage of Radbode was equal to that of the most valiant soldier, and the strength of her arm equal to the most robust.

With the federates the day ended by a feast spread in the hall of the castle of Rutilianus. Wine was not spared, and their ancient military ballads, composed in the Teutonic and Latin languages, or in a dialect formed by a mixture of both, were sung during the greater part of the evening. It was near midnight when most of them retired. Radbode, however, invited a certain number of the old soldiers to pass the night at the castle, to supply, in case of need, as she pretended, the place of the numerous train of domestics who usually attended on Sylvia, and who could not be found in this castle, which was generally uninhabited.

CHAP. XII.

GOTHIC SUPERSTITIONS.

"In the eighth year of his episcopal dignity, as one might
"he lay asleep, after having visited his diocese and the
"castles of the church, St. Tetricus appeared to him with
"a threatening countenance: WHAT DOST THOU HERE, PAP-
"POLUS? said he to him. WHEREFORE DOST THOU POLLUTE
"MY SEAT? WHEREFORE DOST THOU INVADE MY CHURCH?
"WHEREFORE DOST THOU LEAD ASTRAY THE FLOCK THAT WAS
"CONFIDED UNTO ME? AVAUNT! YIELD THY PLACE UNTO
"ANOTHER. Saying these words he smote him with violence
"on the breast with a truncheon he held in his hand.
"Pappolus awoke, and felt severe pain in that part of his
"body; in his anguish he loathed all food—the third day
"he expired, vomiting streams of black gore."—*Gregory of
Tours, lib. v. cap. v. p. 236.*

THE two Roman ladies were surprised at the strength, skill, and agility of Radbode, and still more so at the interest she seemed to excite among the companions in arms of her husband, who, with much warmth, expressed their high opinion of her valour and address. "She is," said Sylvia, "such a woman as we rarely meet

“with; since I have given her a confidential situation in this mansion, I have had several proofs of her prudence, her judgment, and her integrity. The senator Florentius, who was very fond of her husband, had several opportunities of knowing her merit; and when I had the misfortune to lose him, Radbode evinced feelings which I should not have suspected she possessed, either from her outward appearance or the life she had led.”

These words stimulated the curiosity of Julia, and as the intention of their short excursion was to observe and examine this barbarian colony, living under Felix's protection, at a time when men of the same origin, having the same habits of life, and speaking the same tongue, were on the point of becoming their masters, they called Radbode, and amused themselves with putting various questions to her.

Radbode and her husband were born among the Franks in Toxandria; she was now past her fiftieth year; she had hardly reached her eighteenth when she accompanied her husband to the army levied by the Emperor Majorian, for the purpose of waging war in Africa. Since that time she had followed him to the field for twenty years, both in Italy and Gaul: never did she quit his side, even in the most bloody en-

gagements; she had braved death under its most hideous forms—sometimes exposed to the enemy's sword—sometimes shut up in military hospitals, amid the ravages of contagious fever. She had often dealt out to the enemy that death she loved to face; for her skill in handling the sabre and the battleaxe had not been confined to the mere sport of a mock-fight. Not less ardent in the battle than the soldier whose hardships and dangers she shared, she darted on the foe with irresistible impetuosity; she dealt her blows with fury, and she boasted of the number of Alans, Visigoths, and Germans she had felled with her battleaxe. On more than one occasion she had slain the antagonist of her sinking husband; once she had rendered the same service to Fulvius Florentius; and in gratitude for that deliverance, when Radbode's husband was killed, about twelve years since, Sylvia placed her in the castle of Rutilianus, entrusting to her the care of that estate, and the management of those who tilled it.

After speaking to her of her campaigns and warlike exploits, and hearing several interesting anecdotes of the different Roman and barbarian generals, who in her time had headed the armies of the empire, Julia asked her how she liked her present solitary and retired situation.

“Thanks to the kindness of the most munificent Sylvia,” answered she, “I should be happy could I divest myself of fear.”

“Fear, did you say!” exclaimed the two ladies with astonishment, “we had believed that feeling unknown to you.”

“Radbode fears nought that can die,” replied she, “but what avails courage against that which is already dead?”

“I am still at a loss,” said Julia, “to know how fear can be inspired by that which is dead, and has therefore ceased to act?”

“I know not,” said Radbode, “whether the Romans fancy our existence ends with death, or that the gates of the tomb can never be unfolded to the souls of the unfortunate; but I know full well that we Germans have often seen the shade of the dead rise from his sepulchre and return to the earth to call for vengeance. Woe to him who meets that spirit, for it is in misery, and misery it wishes to produce. Pity dies with humanity, and the shade of the most beneficent among men returns to the world with a desire of committing evil: its look freezes the blood; its breath sends death to the heart; if it speak to you it is to betray; if it advise you, it is to destroy.”

“But,” replied Sylvia, “you who have so

“ often slept on the battle-field, did you ever see
“ the spirits of the dead arise to demand retri-
“ bution for the blood you yourself had shed ? ”

“ No, they who fall sword in hand in the
“ strife of battle, suffer no more ; they complain
“ not, neither have they cause ; but when trea-
“ chery has encompassed them ; when they fall
“ before domestic perfidy, like the wretched
“ Marcus Rutilianus—”

“ Many years have passed since Rutilianus
“ died ; you never knew either him or his fa-
“ mily ; they cannot foster resentment against
“ you. He who caused their death perished
“ with them. He reaped not the fruit of his
“ crime, neither did he transmit it to his heirs :
“ why then should the tomb open for one who
“ has no justice to demand, no secret to di-
“ vulge ? ”

“ I know not, but spirits are not masters of
“ their actions as are the living ; they never ap-
“ pear but in the murk of night, they are as it
“ were chained down to one spot ; they fear the
“ eye of the inquisitive, and at the approach of
“ many they retire. Rutilianus has, doubtless,
“ some mystery to unfold, for his spirit walks.
“ Perhaps as all here are of barbarian origin,
“ he awaits to address a Roman ; perhaps this
“ night will he tell to you, Sylvia, or to you,

“ Julia, what he will not divulge to Radbode.
“ Was he not the friend of Julius Severus; and
“ is it not possible he expects from him a re-
“ venge that has hitherto been refused?”

There is something so contagious in superstition that although these northern terrors were unknown to the two Roman ladies, they involuntarily shuddered at the idea that the spirit awaited their coming.

“ But,” said Sylvia, “ you say the spirit of
“ Rutilianus haunts the castle—have you ever
“ seen it?”

“ Often have I seen as clearly as I now see
“ you, his light mount and descend the steps of
“ the Cher, nor am I the only one who has seen
“ it: in the whole camp of the federates there is
“ not perhaps one individual who has not seen
“ it as well as myself. Often have I heard him
“ in this very apartment.”—It was the room
destined for Julia.—“ I could not be mis-
“ taken, for I sleep below and the shepherd
“ sleeps above, and we both heard him at the
“ same time.”

“ The noise and the light might have pro-
“ ceeded from human beings. Have you seen
“ anything supernatural?”

“ All here is supernatural. On every side
“ are you exposed to meet the ghosts of Ruti-
“ lianus and his hapless family. But generally

“ it is in the distance that the shades appear:
“ they wrap themselves in gloom. See this
“ hand,” said she, uncovering a vigorous arm,
which more resembled that of a soldier than
a woman’s. “ This hand once seized an eagle
“ which the Gepidi had snatched from our sol-
“ diers, and brought it back in triumph to our
“ cohort. Well! that hand trembles like the
“ leaf, when, in a winter’s night, I see from these
“ windows, before yon forest, the Vandals, white
“ as snow, dismount from their milk-white steeds.
“ Among them stands Rutilianus with his six
“ children; he is wounded, transfixed by a long
“ Vandal javelin. But he intreats, he craves
“ mercy, not for himself but for his children.
“ The barbarians mock his griefs; they feign to
“ yield to his intreaties, and when he extends
“ his arms to give one last embrace to his son,
“ whom he thinks they permit to live—that
“ son’s head rolls on the snow. Another is
“ suspended from the branch of an oak—another
“ is crushed under the hoofs of the horses. Ru-
“ tilianus covers with his body, the last and the
“ youngest; instantly are ten lances couched
“ against them, and the body of the son is
“ pierced with that of the father.”

“ But where—when—how—did you see this
“ dreadful sight?”

“ Yonder,” replied Radbode, opening the

window, and shewing the edge of the wood about five hundred paces distant. "Yonder
" was the murder committed, two hours after
" midnight, on the day of the ides of Decem-
" ber, and yonder every year, for the twelve
" that I have inhabited this spot, on the ides of
" December is the same scene represented by
" supernatural beings."

" The spot you point to is very distant," observed Julia, " and in the darkness of night your
" imagination had, doubtless, a greater share
" than your sight in representing to you this
" horrid tragedy."

" All the murders were not committed so far
" off," replied Radbode, " in the large hall,
" where you now hear the resounding shouts of
" joy, Paulus and Damia, the brother and faith-
" less spouse of Rutilianus ended that same
" night their guilty lives. More than once, cross-
" ing that hall at one of the extremities, have I
" seen those two wretches bound to the two posts
" of the door; their hands were tied behind them;
" the gore trickled from their throats, their arms,
" their breasts; they were reproaching each
" other's treachery, and the shameful death that
" awaited both, as soon as the blood of their
" veins should be exhausted."

Sylvia, perceiving that Julia turned pale at this

description, observed to her that the architrave of the door Radbode had spoken of, was supported by two Cariatides, which, in her terror, her imagination had probably pourtrayed as covered with blood.

Eudoxus and Martin were not present at this conversation. The one was in the great hall, presiding at the feast of the soldiers; the other was reading his breviary. When they entered, they were struck with the appearance of fear and anxiety impressed on the countenances of the two Roman ladies. They related the tales of Radbode, who in part repeated them, adding some new circumstances. Sylvia well knew she could not rely on the courage of either, for protection in case of real danger; but she expected from their wisdom a support which she felt necessary both for herself and her friend. The horrid crimes these walls had witnessed filled her with a dread she had, till now, been a stranger to; she felt she had not strength to resist a fear which had communicated itself to a woman of Radbode's courage. She had, however, always regarded tales of this nature as vulgar errors, to which she rarely attended, and she relied on these two learned men for a demonstration of their falsehood.

Eudoxus, indeed, though he grew pale with

fear, when he heard Radbode's dreadful tale, could not bring himself to believe that the spirit of Rutilianus was still an inhabitant of the castle, or that it returned from the tomb with the power of committing mischief. He recalled to his memory what he had seen in the classic authors on the subject of spirits and phantoms. He was aware the belief in them was not entirely unknown to the ancients, but the allusions to it were so rare, so completely unconnected with historical record, that he placed it in the number of the most contemptible of popular prejudices, introduced among civilized people, by their communication with barbarian slaves. He was, therefore, rather inclined to attribute the sounds and lights Radbode spoke of, to men of flesh and bone, to men whose evil designs were to be feared. He intreated Sylvia to take all the measures which during the night might insure the safety of herself, for he durst not speak of his own person: he begged of her to keep in the castle all the veterans who were still at table, and when Radbode assured him there was not one among them who would dare face an apparition, he suggested the propriety of placing in the corridors those fierce mastiffs who had in the afternoon attacked the furious bull, and whose courage, unlike that of the federates,

could not be damped by tales of ghosts and goblins.

Martin drew from these stories an opposite conclusion; he saw in the spectres a new proof of the immortality of the soul, and its punishment in the life to come. He was angry at the incredulity of those who doubted the existence of disembodied spirits. To him a prodigy was ever more probable than a natural event; the gods and the demons, the souls of the saints and of the damned, in his opinion, all held communication with men; and instead of using human means of defence against the spirits of the castle he proposed to resist them by exorcisms; then, he asserted, there would no longer be any fear, except for the infidels and those who had not a pure and spotless conscience.

The alarm spread among the guests in the castle, in spite of this assurance, which Eudoxus took to himself as an indirect threat, rather than as an argument to tranquillize his fears. Julia and Sylvia, without attempting to reason on the subject of their apprehensions, were more terrified than they ventured to avow. All they had done to spirit up their courage; all the counsels they had asked, had served only to augment their fears. They resolved, however, to use the precautions re-

commended by Eudoxus, and to prepare for defence, as though they were threatened with an immediate attack. First, they wished to close the communication between the galleries of the castle and the steps leading to the Cher: but that was impossible; the doors had fallen with old age and had never been repaired; the locks were out of order, and none of the fastenings had resisted the ravages of mould and humidity during thirty years of neglect; all in the mansion bore visible marks of the long absence of the owner.

Eudoxus, after reconnoitring the place with Radbode, proposed that a guard should be set in the vestibule to which the steps of the Cher led, and whence there was a communication to the different galleries. Some of the veterans, after great persuasion, promised to pass the night there with torches; but they intreated Martin first to sprinkle the room with holy water: The mastiffs were at the same time unchained and allowed to prowl on the ground floor of the castle. The travellers, after promising they would listen with attention, call at the least noise, and come to the assistance of each other, retired to their separate apartments, feeling less astonishment at the fear of Radbode, than at the courage with which she persisted in her

resolution of inhabiting a lonely mansion, in which they did not think themselves safe for one night with a guard of twenty men.

It must be observed however, the imagination of these twenty men was alarmed by the precautions they saw the guests take. They were placed on guard at two different posts ; one half only was to remain in the large hall, underneath the apartments and near the principal gate ; the other was posted in the vestibule to which the steps of the Cher led ; they all promised to patrol hourly in the corridors. But these very preparations made them believe there was some particular danger to be feared that night. While on the watch they began to tell each other tales of the different apparitions for which this castle was noted miles around, and thus confirmed each other in the expectation of something extraordinary. These tales they often interrupted, either to cast a look of fearful anxiety on the long passages opening on the vestibule, and over which their torches scattered a glimmering light, or to listen to the distant hollow sounds they sometimes fancied they could hear on the stairs leading to the river. One of the federates on guard in the vestibule complained of cold and wet, and all his companions, although not much in the habit of caring for the weather,

immediately acceded to the proposal of joining their friends who were keeping watch in the hall.

In the morning when Sylvia met Julia in her apartment, expecting to laugh with her over the vain terrors of the night, she was astonished at her pale and haggard countenance. "For heaven's sake tell me, my dear, what ails you?" said she to Julia. "Nothing I hope," answered Julia, "more than the fatigue of a restless night, and the agitation of horrid dreams. Even now I can hardly think but there was something real in what seemed so perfectly represented to my eyes." At the same time she searched and desired her friend to search with her, in order to ascertain if any trace remained of a nocturnal visit to her apartment. Not being able to discover any thing that might confirm her suspicions, they went out together, and Julia felt sufficient courage to describe her dream, when she had been cheered by the rays of the sun and the freshness of the morning breeze, but not before.

"The more I endeavour to collect my ideas," said she, "the more I am struck with the contrast between the other unconnected dreams of this horrid night, and one vision which interrupted them, so striking that I cannot distinguish it from reality. I saw Rutilianus and

“ the slaughter of his children. I saw the scenes
“ Radbode described, and others yet more hor-
“ rid. Alarmed I awoke; then again I sunk into
“ sleep, but still the same images haunted me :
“ I perceived that my blood was inflamed by
“ fever, and I could no longer decide whether
“ I was asleep or awake. Suddenly the whole
“ castle appeared on fire; I felt the smoke stifle
“ my breath, the flame swept my face. I opened
“ my eyes, a man wrapt in the long frock of a
“ penitent held a torch close to my head and ex-
“ amined my features with attention. *It is surely*
“ *her*, said he to another man, concealed under
“ a similar habit, who was standing at the door,
“ and holding a third frock. *Julia Severa*, said
“ the first, *in the name of all the saints who reign*
“ *in heaven; in the name of St. Denis, of St.*
“ *Germain, of St. Martin of Tours arise;—quit*
“ *the vain pomps of the world, renounce thy fool-*
“ *ish hopes, take the garb of penance and fol-*
“ *low us.* He had not finished speaking when
“ the mastiffs were heard to bark with fury at
“ the bottom of the castle. His companion, who
“ was watching at the door, beckoned to him;
“ instantly the former extinguished his torch,
“ every thing was now hidden in deep darkness,
“ and I heard no sounds save the baying of the
“ dogs, which did not cease during the whole
“ night to renew my terrors.”

CHAP. XIII.

LETTERS FROM SOISSONS.

"The Franks not being able to succeed by force, proposed an alliance, which the Armoricans willingly accepted. They united in one nation, which became very powerful. The Roman soldiers who were stationed in the other parts of Gaul, rather than submit to the Arians (Visigoths), also joined the Franks and gave up to them the provinces they occupied."—*Procopius de Bello Gothico*, lib. i. cap. 12. p. 341.

A FINE autumn sun shone on the ancient mansion of Rutilianus; the woods which bounded the meadow had scarcely begun to lose their leaves; but already the varied tints, the yellow, the orange, the purple, had succeeded to the summer's green. Numerous flocks were scattered over the more distant meads, and on the opposite bank of the Cher. The shepherds, who had brought their milk to the castle for the breakfast of the travellers, were standing before the portal; the huntsmen were calling their dogs, and Sylvia's slaves were harnessing the mules of

her litter, and saddling the horses of the other travellers. As far as the eye could reach, all around them was life and motion. Julia, however, was thoughtful and uneasy; notwithstanding the pleasure she had felt by the gratification of her curiosity in the camp of the federates, in the conversation of Radbode, and the tragic history of Rutilianus, as soon as the signal for departure was given she eagerly quitted the borders of the Cher, feeling no desire to visit them again.

Sylvia's litter had two seats; but Julia gave up to Martin the one which was offered to her: she preferred riding on horseback, hoping that exercise, and a change of scene, would efface the painful recollections of the preceding night. Eudoxus, who was also on horseback, rode by her side. "We may now exclaim with Propertius," said he,

"Sunt aliquid manes : lethum non omnia finit ;

"Laridaque evictos effugit umbra rogos."

*"The manes are indeed something, and death
doth not end all, for the pallid shade escapes
triumphant from the pyre."*

"You do then begin to believe," said Julia,
"that the terrors, which we yesterday attri-

“buted to superstition, are indeed founded on
“reality?”

“I certainly never regarded the seventh
“elegy of the fourth book of Propertius as an
“irrefragable proof of that opinion. With him
“it is only a poetic licence; in bringing for-
“ward Cynthia’s shade he strikes the imagina-
“tion in a more forcible manner.”

“I never wish to have my imagination struck
“so forcibly again,” said Julia; “but yet I
“should like to know if what I saw was a
“dream, or something real.”

Eudoxus in reply, spoke to her of the gates
of horn and ivory, through which, according to
Virgil, true and false dreams are despatched to
mortals; he spoke to her of the *ὄνειροπόλοι*, or
interpreters of dreams, and the different rules of
their art; in short, he brought forward all that
his knowledge of antiquity could furnish him
with on the subject. But that was not what
Julia wanted; and after some vain attempts to
bring him to the consideration of what caused
her uneasiness, and discovering by his answer
to an unexpected question on her part, that
Eudoxus had not passed the night in his cham-
ber, but had gone down to the hall, where he
slept in his cloak, she ceased keeping up the

conversation by fresh questions, and yielded to her own reflections.

The more she thought of the apparition she fancied she had seen, the less could she bring herself to believe that it was not real. All the other dreams which had agitated her mind presented themselves to her memory with that confusion of impossible and contradictory circumstances, which our imagination admits, during sleep, without reluctance, and which serve afterwards to distinguish the phantoms of the brain from reality. But the penitent who had spoken to her appeared ever present to her mind; the sound of his voice was still ringing in her ears: that short vision was neither connected with what preceded, nor with what followed: it responded to no idea she had before in her imagination; it presented no sense she could clearly comprehend; but it remained in her memory, never to be cancelled, mingling with nothing vague, admitting no doubt, and needing the addition of no circumstance for its intelligibility.

The road from the camp of the federates to Noviliacum crossed a country almost desert, and for the greater part sterile. The landscape owed all its beauties to the rich tints of autumn, otherwise it presented no object worthy of at-

tention. No villages were to be seen where the husbandmen combined to repel the beasts of the forest, and procure the comforts of life; no lone house was visible where a single family supported itself by its own labour and economy. In the distance the traveller heard neither the crow of the cock, nor the baying of the house-dog, nor the bleatings of the sheep. Some footsteps of horses and oxen were printed on the dust; but they belonged to the half-wild herds which wandered in full liberty, unaccompanied by the pastor. In the neighbourhood of the Cher, some vineyards and arable fields were seen; but as the traveller retired from the banks, these monuments of the labour of man became gradually more rare, and at length entirely disappeared.

Crossing these wilds, Julia and Sylvia overtook a troop of beggars, who formed a sort of caravan, which was travelling from Bourges to Tours. Five or six asses, laden with panniers, were at the head; some of these panniers were filled with the utensils and baggage of the mendicants; in others were seen their children standing upright, and raising their little heads above the hampers to peep at the road. The fathers and mothers followed them with sticks in their hands. They carried with them mira-

culous images, crosses that had been blessed, and rags that had lain four and twenty hours on the shrine of St. Stephen of Bourges, or St. Martin of Tours. This was the coin with which they paid the charity of the good devout women, when they could not pass in a day from one convent to another, and thus rely entirely on the hospitality of the monks. They asked charity of the travellers; and after they had received some alms, they detained for a long time the slave who was with the baggage, putting various questions to him concerning the names and rank of the two Roman ladies, and their suite; the object of their journey, and their future projects. Eudoxus, who heard a part of this conversation, called back the slave with impatience. "I distrust that rabble," said he to Julia, "they are spies of the monks, who encourage them in idleness, and give them food. By their means all we do in our houses is known in the convents; even a register is kept of our thoughts; and thus those who make a vow to renounce the world, now hold the world in subjection."

The mendicants soon after continued their way towards the west, on a sort of high road; while the travellers, turning northward in the direction of the Loire, crossed the wilds of

Sologne, without meeting a living soul until they arrived at Noviliacum.

Some letters were awaiting their arrival at the castle; these diverted the recollections of their journey, and brought their attention from the past to the future. Severus wrote to Sylvia, thanking her for the generous hospitality she had shewn his daughter, and informing her that Julia would now cease to trespass on her kindness; he said he wished to have his daughter near him, and had therefore commissioned a matron, who would soon arrive at Noviliacum, to take care of her and accompany her on the journey.

Another letter of Julius Severus, addressed to his daughter, was couched in the following terms:

“ My dear daughter: the time is come when
“ I can no longer refrain from calling you to my
“ presence, that I may again press you to my
“ bosom. It would be indecorous both in you
“ and me, were you to sojourn longer at the
“ house of persons who have received you with
“ a tenderness I shall ever with gratitude recollect.
“ Felix Florentius is about to return to
“ Noviliacum; you could no longer with propriety remain under the same roof with him,
“ for he has conceived the project of an alliance
“ with our family, which, although most honour-

“able, by no means suits our present circum-
“stances. Prepare, dear daughter, for a more
“glorious union; for more power, for more
“wealth than a Roman senator can give you.
“It was not an illusion that seduced the
“priestess, when, standing on the sacred tripod,
“she foretold that by you the Roman should
“be reconciled to the barbarian, and that the
“diadem of the Frank king should gird your
“forehead. To whatever power Lamia may
“have been indebted for her foreknowledge,
“her eyes certainly saw your destiny as plainly
“as ours see present objects. It is the express
“order of Clovis that summons you to Soissons
“to make you his bride. By Clovis’ order the
“matron Sulpitia will quit Chartres on the day
“of the ides of October, to accompany you;
“and a body of Franks will advance to that
“town in order to escort you in safety: as soon
“as Sulpitia shall arrive, I desire you will in-
“stantly depart. If you can, without offend-
“ing the family of which you are now an in-
“mate, avoid meeting Felix Florentius, who
“departs about the same time from this place.
“I feel confident that my daughter, when raised
“to higher dignity, will never be wanting in
“gratitude towards a family that has shewn her
“so much kindness; but she would still more

“ be wanting in gratitude—in gratitude towards
“ her father—were she not to favour, with all
“ her might, a project to which I have not hesi-
“ tated to sacrifice both my inclination and my
“ interest !”

The same courier brought the following letter
from Felix Florentius to his mother :

“ *Felix Florentius to the most illustrious and the*
“ *most excellent lady, Sylvia Numantia, his mo-*
“ *ther,* GREETING :

“ I return to you, my dear mother, with the
“ strongest conviction I ever yet experienced of
“ the want of your maternal tenderness, your
“ advice, your generous assistance. I deceived
“ myself when I fancied I was adapted for a
“ public situation. I felt nothing but disgust
“ when I came in close union with those called
“ great men, and my indignation was excited
“ when I discovered the pitiful and sordid mo-
“ tives which led them to decide on the fate of
“ nations. The negotiation with which I was
“ intrusted has been successful, and the country
“ between the Seine and the Loire will hence-
“ forth be safe from the ravages of the Franks ;
“ and it is unnecessary for us who live south-
“ ward of the Loire even to form an alliance
“ with those barbarians. But can a Roman

“ deem it a success to have put his hand to a
“ treaty which seals the slavery of the Romans
“ to the barbarians? Can he deem it a success
“ to have prevailed on a haughty master to ac-
“ cept the cowardly tender we have made of our
“ liberty, of our laws, nay, of the very name
“ our ancestors bore? I shall feel some pleasure
“ in my success if I have, indeed, saved my de-
“ fenceless countrymen from the sword of the
“ barbarians; but my heart reproaches me with
“ having contributed to the greatness of the
“ enemies of Rome, to the greatness of the fu-
“ ture oppressors of Gaul. The Franks, whose
“ cruelty rendered them before so dreadful, will
“ become still more so by the extent of their
“ dominion. The Armoricans have united with
“ them, our own soldiers have joined their
“ standard, and those we but yesterday re-
“ garded as a handful of adventurers, now give
“ laws to one-fourth of ancient Gaul. Shud-
“ dering at the idea of having injured my coun-
“ try where I hoped to serve it, I wish to with-
“ draw from public life; never more to enter
“ the hateful audience-hall of Clovis; never
“ more to hear the hoarse accents of that bar-
“ barian. Happy were I never to turn my
“ steps from Noviliacum, but there pass my life
“ amid domestic ties, occupied only with the

“ love of my mother, and of one whom I
“ thought a friend ; one whom I preferred to
“ every thing in this world, and from whom
“ alone I would seek hope, consolation, and
“ happiness. . With her I might forget all that
“ passes beyond our two rivers, see none but her
“ in the world, and expect from her alone those
“ generous emotions we can no longer seek
“ either in the pursuit of glory or in the service of
“ our country. But that happiness is also denied
“ me : the sword of the barbarian has smitten
“ our eagles ; his jargon corrupts our language ;
“ his laws annihilate our laws ; his name even
“ replaces the august name of Rome. Must it
“ then be, that his impure breath shall pollute
“ our families ; that even under the shelter of
“ our roofs he shall come to destroy our do-
“ mestic happiness, present to us as an object
“ of ambition what should be the object of our
“ shame, and make us pant for what our ances-
“ tors held in abhorrence !—No ; in solitude
“ will I pass my sorrowful life ; I will witness
“ the fall of what I most respected, the death of
“ all I have cherished ; without wife, without
“ children, without hope, without country, I
“ will languish till the day which shall call me
“ to the tomb of my ancestors.”

“ P. S. I shall depart two days later than I

“expected; but I shall travel with speed, in
“order, if possible, to reach Noviliacum before
“the matron of Chartres, whose intended ar-
“rival has been announced to you. I intreat
“you, for heaven’s sake, try to gain a few
“hours; arrange so that Julia Severa may not
“depart before I see her; arrange so that
“should the matron arrive previously she may
“not find her at home, and thus snatch her from
“my last look.”

The courier, who had brought these despatches, had passed through Chartres, where he had seen Sulpitia, the wife of the president of the curia, who was to accompany Julia on her journey: he informed them that Sulpitia, regarding her visit to Noviliacum as an excellent opportunity for displaying her best attire and a sumptuous equipage, had not yet finished her preparations, and could not start so soon as Severus wished: she would not consequently be there before the expiration of two days. According to the calculation of Sylvia that was the very day Felix would arrive.

The two Roman ladies read with equal emotion the letters brought to them by the courier from Soissons. Julia, her heart overwhelmed by grief, her eyes swimming in tears, threw herself into Sylvia’s arms, and gave her the letter

she had just received from her father. Sylvia, in turn, gave to Julia her son's letter, and in their sorrow the two friends had at least the consolation of keeping no secret from each other. One letter served to explain the other. Sylvia saw, as she had before suspected, that her son loved and was loved in return; she saw that her young friend viewed with horror the projected marriage with the king of the Franks; she saw that Julia desired an interview before she obeyed her father, as much as Felix did; and though she could not guess what projects they might form to save themselves from their threatened destiny, she saw that Julia had neither lost, nor was willing to lose, all hope. She felt that it belonged to her to teach the two young persons prudence; and notwithstanding the desire she had of seeing them united, she respected the paternal authority of Julius Severus; she dreaded the power and vengeance of the Frank king, whose dominion extended nearly to the gates of Noviliacum, and whose means of injury increased rapidly. Too well did she know that Clovis would never allow a senator of Gaul to carry off his chosen bride with impunity.

Sylvia endeavoured to tranquillize Julia by the tenderest embraces, by promises of unalterable friendship, and by the consideration of the good she might do to her fellow-citizens, to her

country, to all in distress. Clovis was young; it was said he united in himself all that was pleasing to the eye and flattering to ambition: was it not to be supposed he might possess sensibility also, that he might yield to the gentle influence of his wife, and cast aside the ferocity of the barbarian, considering himself the fellow-citizen of her whom he married? Was it not known that Placidia had entirely changed the disposition of Adolphus, and made of that Visigoth king the most zealous defender of the rights of the Roman empire, which at first he wished to overturn?

- To all this Julia answered only by her tears; she pressed Sylvia in her arms, she shuddered at the name of Clovis, and shook her head with an expression shewing that her repugnance was still greater than her incredulity. Raising at length her eyes towards her friend,—“he asked to see me,” said she. “O grant his request, allow me “to remain until I once more hear his voice—“let me not see the hateful Sulpitia before he “comes!”

Sylvia hesitated between the positive request of Felix, and the no less positive orders of Severus, to whom by the rights of hospitality she thought herself responsible. She wished, at least, to leave the decision to chance, and as Felix and Sulpitia would probably arrive the

same day, she expressed the propriety of awaiting the new orders which the matron might bring from Severus.

“No,” exclaimed Julia, “let us arrange so that she may not find me here; we will depart and continue our excursions in the neighbourhood; we will visit the ruins of Hesodunum, which for so long a time have been the object of our curiosity. Eudoxus and Martin shall stay here to receive Sulpitia; they will inform her that we shall return the same day; they will tell her that this excursion has long been projected, and thus, at least, will she find it impossible to take me away the same evening.”

Sylvia assented to this arrangement. According to their calculation Sulpitia would not arrive before the noon of the third day; the morrow could therefore be devoted to the repose they so much wanted; and should Felix make great speed he would probably precede Sulpitia and reach Noviliacum that day.

This, however, was contrary to Julia's plan. “Is there not,” said she, “a direct road leading from Chartres to Hesodunum?”

“Yes, the road branches off at a place five leagues distant, and thence to Hesodunum is a journey of five leagues.”

“Felix, therefore might go to Hesodunum and meet us before he arrives at Noviliacum?”

“Certainly, were he advised.”

“And why, dear mother, should you not advise him?”

“In truth, I do not exactly see how I can excuse myself in thus opposing the commands of your father. Consider the ignorance of slaves; think of their indiscretion, and judge what your father would be justified in saying, should any one of Sulpitia’s suite see my messenger and discover that I have sent to Felix the information which I am bound to communicate to herself also.”

“Dumnorix, my foster-brother, is still here; in him I fear neither indiscretion nor want of skill; he may take your note, and I hope you will not refuse to write.”

Sylvia consented; she wrote to her son, informing him at what hour they should be at Hesodunum, and inviting him to take that road, should he find it impossible to reach Noviliacum before their departure.

The two friends then retired to their apartments. But notwithstanding the fatigue of the journey, the watchings and terrors of the preceding night, Julia found not the sleep she so much wanted. Clovis, her father, and Felix,

presented themselves to her imagination by turns. Clovis, polluted with the Roman blood he had already shed and still thirsting for more, insulting her opinions, her feelings, her delicacy; uniting treachery to cruelty, and inspiring her with as much horror as the marriage vow must force her to pledge love to him. Severus, detained a prisoner at the barbarian's court, threatened with punishment for the disobedience of his daughter, accusing her of having sacrificed to a flitting passion, to caprice, the liberty, perhaps the life of her father. Felix, thrown into despair by the loss of her, seeing no longer any resource, forming no more projects, and expressing himself with that heartless despondency in which the letter to his mother was written.

In the midst of these cruel meditations, the vision of the preceding night, which till now she had been unable to comprehend, struck her as the light of prophecy. Two monks, two penitents, had offered her the garb of penance. She fancied she could still hear the words of him who addressed her:—*Julia Severa, in the name of all the saints who reign in heaven; in the name of St. Denis, of St. Germain, of St. Martin of Tours, arise;—quit the vain pomps of the world, renounce thy foolish hopes, take the garb*

of penance and follow us. The meaning of these words was now but too clear. It was, doubtless, St. Martin himself who had spoken to her; it was at his convent that he invited her to pass the rest of her days in penitence. *Quit the vain pomps of the world;*—this was Clovis and royalty: *renounce thy foolish hopes;*—this was Felix and domestic happiness: *arise and follow us;*—these words decided her fate.

Julia had been educated in the catholic faith, but under the inspection of her father, who remained secretly a pagan; for the priests, therefore, she felt more fear than love, for she had often experienced their enmity; the monastic life excited in her no feelings but those of disgust; she fancied she should in the convents find neither piety more enlightened nor morals more pure, than in the world, nor any satisfaction for her mind or her heart. To her the convent presented no other image than that of a perpetual prison: it was the punishment of the greatest criminals, reserved for the innocent by a false zeal, mistaken for religion. She dreaded the fate that hung over her; but was it possible for her to doubt that that fate awaited her? Was it not evident the convent was the only asylum which could save her from the pursuit of Clovis or the authority of her father?

Had not the convent been pointed out as her only refuge, by those celestial messengers who had appeared to her in so miraculous a manner, who had spoken to her with such a tone of authority, who had shewn themselves as corporeal beings, and whom she could not confound with the phantoms which tormented her imagination the same night?

Racked by these cruel reflections, Julia could not enjoy a moment's repose, and with gladness did she greet the first rays of the sun which gilded the domes of Noviliacum.

CHAP. XIV.

THE CELTIC RUINS.

ET QUIBUS INMITIS PLACATUR SANGUINE DIRO
TEUTATES, HORRENSQUE FERIS ALTARIBUS HESUS;
ET TARANIS SCYTHICÆ NON MITIOR ARA DIANÆ;
* * * * *
ET VOS BARBARICOS RITUS, MOREMQUE SINISTRUM
SACRORUM DRUIDÆ POSITIS REPETISTIS AB ARMIS.

Lucan. Phar. Lib. i. v. 444.

And you, where Hesus' horrid altar stands,
Where dire Teutates human blood demands;
Where Taranis by wretches is obey'd,
And vies in slaughter with the Scythian maid:

* * * * *

The Druids now, while arms are heard no more,
Old mysteries and barbarous rites restore. *Rowe.*

TWENTY-FOUR hours had elapsed since that sleepless night, and they had been passed in sorrowful perturbation. Sometimes Julia sunk into mournful despair, at others she recovered herself only to experience alternately the agitations of hope and fear. Felix, who on the opposite bank of the Loire had been her deliverer—Felix, who had shewn so much zeal in

her service—Felix, who loved her, who had asked her hand of her father, was about to arrive. Though his heart was bursting with grief, though he perhaps wished to see her only for the purpose of bidding her an eternal adieu, yet it was not impossible he might have formed some project for the safety of both. Could she know what unforeseen expedients he might yet point out? Could she think of him without expecting some assistance, and could it be possible that the day of his arrival should not be a day of happiness?

Felix having left Soissons on the sixteenth of October, could not reach Noviliacum on the seventeenth; on the morning therefore of the eighteenth, (fifteenth of the calends of November) Julia and Sylvia prepared to meet him at Hesodunum, whither Dumnorix was to conduct him. The priest Martin was commissioned to receive Sulpitia at Noviliacum; and Eudoxus was invited to accompany the two Roman ladies. This last was an excellent guide to the ruins, and his vast knowledge of ancient lore enabled him to answer all questions concerning those monuments of the political power and religion of the Celts.

The sun was already above the horizon, when Sylvia and Julia entered with Eudoxus into the

boat which was to take them to Hesodunum. Their passage down the stream of the Loire was easy; but as on their return they should be obliged to pull against the current, eight stout rowers were chosen to accompany them. The day was delightful; the clear and copious waters of the Loire rolled unagitated; gliding without resistance over a fine bed of sand, their surface was hardly disturbed by the rapidity of their motion; like a moving mirror they reflected all the objects standing on the delightful banks, and the charming headlands which the bark doubled in succession. Some habitations were scattered on the two banks of the river, where culture was less neglected than in the interior of the country; and on the left border were seen the white and regularly-built cottages of the legionary camp, giving to the slope an appearance of prosperity; but the numerous ruins which crowned the heights, proved that in former days a noble race had on the same spot shared the feast of nature, and enjoyed the advantages which a fertile soil, a happy climate, and an easy navigation offered to the inhabitants of the banks of the Loire.

Among the ruins those of Hesodunum were the most conspicuous, by their imposing mass,

the extent of space they covered, and the loftiness of the rugged rock which the labours of the Carnuti had changed to a fort. Often had they from those walls dared the efforts of the Turones and the Cenomani; often around their consecrated precinct had the Druids led the procession of human victims, whose blood was to flow on the altar of the fierce Hesus, the deity of the Gauls, whose name the town bore. Now the green brambles had taken root in the crevices of the walls and hung over the precipices: while among the ancient habitations of men were seen thick tufts of trees, occasionally crowning the mouldering towers.

However when the travellers approached, when they landed on the pier of the ancient town, melancholy impressions were mingled with their admiration of so picturesque a site. A long succession of generations had passed over that land; but the last had now ended, and the city was become the realm of silence and death. The walls which from the top of the hill descended to the river, and which connected the massy towers of the citadel with the pier on the Loire, were composed of enormous fragments of rocks, skilfully placed over each other without cement; they had often resisted numerous assailants by their strength; but now they

were split in many places, and opened to view the monuments of the ancient superstition of the Druids, the intent of which was already forgotten. The spectator saw circles of colossal stones which seemed the seats of giants assembled in council, with one stone more elevated than the other for their chieftain; altars, where an enormous rock was placed athwart two others with so scrupulous an attention to equilibrium that the hand could easily shake the mass, though it had already stood many centuries and was destined to stand many more.

The citadel commanding all the ruins, was composed of five enormous towers in the shape of a Greek cross, the most lofty and massive of which stood in the centre, and was connected with the four others by strong curtains. These round towers, surmounted by an elegant cornice, and built nearly after the model of the tomb of Cecilia Metella near Rome, were entirely covered with hewn stone and marble. They did not belong to the Celts, but to the earliest period of Roman dominion in Gaul, having taken the place of more ancient buildings, whose form was now forgotten. Between these towers and the river, on the steep of the hill was erected the city of Hesodunum. The site of the ancient palaces of the Gallic lords, of which few vestiges

could be traced, was now occupied by small low huts, formerly inhabited by artificers, fishermen and peasants. They had no pretensions to architectural beauty or elegance, but they were built on a line, and the streets had the appearance of neatness. All the doors were closed, and through some of the windows were seen the mouldering beams of the roof, and different stories falling on each other with the accumulated ruin and desolation which had succeeded to the dwellings of man.

Eudoxus taught his two companions to distinguish the Roman buildings from those of the Celts, those which belonged to the Druidical worship, and those which were destined for political or military purposes. He described the religious ceremonies which every year summoned the pontiffs of the Carnuti to Hesodunum; he explained the important events in the history of Gaul which were attached to the recollection of this fortress: but the whole of this learned dissertation has not reached our days, any more than the ruins which formed its subject; for even the name of Hesodunum is no longer found in any history or in any chart.

Julia heard this display of erudition with distracted attention: amid these ruins she sought only the path which led to the loftiest tower; she ascended to the platform built at the top,

and there she sat in the shade of a wild fig-tree which sprung from the wall; and there, having inquired which was the road to Chartres, she fixed her eyes in that direction, while Sylvia and Eudoxus vainly strove in turn to attract her attention, sometimes towards the majestic course of the Loire, which the eye could follow to a great distance; sometimes to the blue mountains which bounded the horizon, at others to the romantic effect of the ruins where the hand of nature, by the force of vegetation, was gradually destroying the labour of man. At length what she expected with so much impatience, what her eyes sought with so much anxiety, appeared in the distance; she discerned on the road from Chartres three horsemen approaching at full speed. Soon she fancied she could distinguish they were Dumnorix, Diocles and Felix. Therest of the suite of Felix had taken the road to Noviliacum. When Eudoxus saw them he fastened a white veil to a staff, and shaking it in the air like a banner, attracted the attention of the horsemen, and thus pointed out the spot where their friends expected them. In a short time Felix arrived at the gate of the citadel; he ascends;—he stands on the platform by the side of Julia and his mother.

Julia arose and offered her hand to Felix, with a countenance shining with joy. Felix

prostrated himself at her feet, and in a transport of rapture covered her hand with kisses; but Julia instantly threw herself into the arms of Sylvia, and concealing her head in the bosom of her friend, her grief burst in loud sobs.

Felix still held her hand—he could not mistake the cause either of her joy or her grief. Julia loved him;—she had never sought to conceal it; she had never hidden from him the secret of her heart, either by the artifice of the coquet or the reserve of the prude. She loved him; his return had transported her with pleasure; but the idea that she was on the point of losing him, the idea that this interview was the last, soon caused the most heart-rending grief to succeed the first emotions of joy.

As soon as she began to stifle her sobs, Sylvia replaced her gently on her seat, took Eudoxus by the arm and walked to some distance; while the pedagogue, struck with what he had just witnessed, endeavoured to prove by classical quotations, that joy sometimes bursts forth in tears, while grief vents itself in fits of laughter; so that according to the authority of the greatest poets and their best commentators, it would be impossible to decide on the feeling Julia had manifested by the signs both of pleasure and affliction.

Felix, covering with his kisses the hand which Julia did not withdraw, answered to the thoughts she had in her heart, but could not express. He told her, that he loved her passionately; that he loved her as he never before had loved, as he never could love again; that he found no happiness, no hope, but in her; that being once more united to her, no force could now sever them, no fear could ever cause them to renounce a happiness that depended upon themselves alone! "We are still free," said he, "why should we bow to another's will? Why should I renounce all felicity, all hope through life, when my sacrifice would only serve to render your fate more cruel? Why should I abandon you to a barbarian, incapable of appreciating your worth, incapable of loving you; who, should he not himself sacrifice you to brutal jealousy or inconstancy, will, at least, compel you to share the chances that threaten his own life, ever exposed to the poniard of the assassin, or the axe of the executioner?"

Julia raised her eyes, and looked on him with an ineffable mixture of tenderness and grief. "Yes," said she, "I love you—I love you as you love me, but nevertheless all hope is withered in my heart. This day is the last

“ day of happiness I can expect in this life;
“ henceforth I must yield to my destiny; with
“ that destiny it is useless for me to contend; it
“ is swayed by a power that mocks the will of
“ man, and disposes of my life by supernatural
“ means. I can neither comprehend my fate,
“ nor the ways by which I am warned of it;
“ but around me, before me, every where, I see
“ nought but terror, save in you alone. Hell,
“ from the mouth of Lamia, has bid my father
“ unite me to Clovis; heaven, by one of its
“ saints, has commanded me to prepare for the
“ horrid incarceration of a convent: say Felix,
“ remains there one solitary hope?

“ Yes,” he replied, “ some hope yet remains;
“ nay, certainty remains, if we trust our own re-
“ sources, our own courage, instead of listening
“ to oracles, whose falsity is proved by their
“ contradictions. Clovis as yet rules but in a
“ small part of Gaul; here he commands not,
“ and we may shelter ourselves from his vio-
“ lence. We may ask an asylum of the king of
“ the Visigoths, or of the king of the Burgun-
“ dians, without quitting our native land. We
“ can pass into Italy, where, acknowledged by
“ the emperor of the East, the wise and vir-
“ tuous Theodoric will soon become master of
“ Odoacer, who is now besieged, and, under the

“ protection of his Ostrogoths, will restore to the
“ Roman senate its ancient authority. We can
“ find safety and liberty in the islets of Venetia,
“ where the laws of Rome are still acknow-
“ ledged, while arbitrary authority is abolished.
“ Or, lastly, we can seek protection from the
“ emperor of Constantinople; he once received
“ my father hospitably, and honoured him with
“ his confidence, he surely will not reject us. The
“ estates we abandon here do not constitute my
“ whole fortune; and, though in more strait-
“ ened circumstances, we may yet live far from
“ Gaul without knowing poverty.”

“ Ah! it is not poverty,” replied Julia, “ it is
“ not sorrow that I fear with you. But are we
“ to think for ourselves alone? Will not the
“ resolution we shall take decide the fate of
“ those we hold most dear? Hearken to me,
“ Felix! I appeal to your probity, to your
“ honour. Reply to me with frankness. You
“ have seen at Soissons both my father and
“ Clovis; you know on what terms they are
“ together, you can judge of the character of
“ the barbarian. Will you affirm that Julius
“ Severus runs no danger of losing life or li-
“ berty, should Clovis hear that, by giving to
“ you my hand, I have withdrawn myself from
“ his will?”

Felix was silent for some moments; he hesitated, but at length replied—"I will send privately a faithful slave to inform Julius Severus of our flight, in order that he may place himself in safety."

"When we determine our fate according to the impulse of our passions, are we justified in disposing also of another's destiny? Can I deprive my father of his whole fortune? He is now the confidential minister of a powerful prince; can I, to gratify my own desires, force him to become a fugitive and an outlaw?"

Felix fixed his eyes on the ground, and was silent.

"Should we abandon this country, what will become of your mother? Will you drag her with us into exile, far from her property, her habits of life and the objects of her affection? Will you quit her in her declining age? Will you bereave her of a son, in whom she had fondly centred all her hopes of happiness?"

Felix was still silent.

"Have you no duty to fulfil towards the people who dwell on your large estates, towards seven hundred families of whom you are the only protector, perhaps the only patron? Now they enjoy existence, they prosper, they multiply. But though they

“ cannot share in your deliberations, though
“ they can have no influence on your coun-
“ sels, they will be made responsible for the de-
“ termination you are about to make. If, just
“ after negotiating with Clovis, you mortally
“ offend him, be assured that his Franks will
“ spread fire and destruction from the Cher to
“ the Loire, over all your patrimony ; and then
“ hundreds of mothers will have to weep over
“ their slaughtered infants, because we could
“ not conquer our own passions.”

Felix could resist no longer ; his respiration was stifled, his eyes were filled with tears : at length he gave vent to his grief, and Julia, who, while speaking had kept her eyes fixed on the ground, heard him reply to her words by deep groans. She then raised her eyes, and seeing the tears rolling down his cheeks, she leant her head on his shoulder, and while he was pressing her to his bosom, she passed her arm round his neck, returned his embrace, and exclaimed, “ Felix,
“ I love thee—I will love thee for ever !”

CHAP. XV.

A SEPARATION.

TALI QUÆ NUNC, UT CERNIS, HIATU
SUPPLICIIIS INCLUSA TEROR :
QUOD SI NON OMNEM PEPULISTI PECTORE MATREM
. HIS ORO MISERAM DEFENDE CAVERNIS
INQUE SUPERNA REFER.

Claudiani, de Raptu Proserpinæ, lib. iii.

Who now imprisoned as thou seest, in this abyss, am wracked with torment : Ah ! if thou hast not driven the mother from thy bosom, rescue, I pray thee, me *thine* unhappy *child* from these caverns, and bring me back to earth.

THIS tender avowal, elicited by a feeling of mutual sorrow ; this first spontaneous embrace, given when their souls were sunk in despair, changed not the situation of the two lovers, nor their future prospects. Sylvia joined them, having sent Eudoxus with a message to the boatmen. She endeavoured, in her turn, to raise their hopes and give them consolation. Felix and Julia had opened their hearts to her without reserve ; there was not a secret thought, nor apprehension, that was not equally known to

all the three; not one private vow made by the one that was not shared by the two others.

Sylvia, considering the different projects of her son, and of her whom she loved to call daughter, endeavoured to give a more tranquil tone to their discussion, to remove all exaggeration both from their hopes and their fears, to guard them equally against imposing on themselves duties too austere, and against the temptation to neglect those they were bound to fulfil. But the more they thought of their situation, the more they found themselves surrounded by obstacles; the more perfectly did they feel convinced that the calamities of their country strongly embittered individual misfortune.

An immediate marriage of Felix with Julia, and a flight together, in order to escape the authority of Julius Severus, and the vengeance of Clovis, appeared to all equally opposed to duty and prudence. But were there no means of gaining time? Might it not be expected that by multiplying the indirect obstacles to this dreaded union, they would be seconded by unforeseen events—by the inconstancy of Clovis himself, or by the success of some one of the factions, who had fixed on another spouse for him?

Sylvia proposed to Julia to retire for some time to a convent, to allege a vow, a pilgrimage,

or some one of those numerous motives of devotion to which in those times all other things were made to yield; which daily served to cloke worldly designs, and which the most powerful were compelled, by the authority of the whole ecclesiastical body, to respect. Julia could not turn her thoughts, without shuddering, on that garb of penance which had been presented to her in a vision, and which seemed to announce for her an eternal engagement. But she had another reason for not putting trust in this expedient,—neither Severus nor Clovis was a Christian, and it was not probable they would respect in that religion an engagement so contrary to their views. They would perhaps force her from the convent she had chosen as an asylum, and then to danger would be added infamy.

It might be more easy to feign sickness or an accident to prolong her stay at Noviliacum, and in contemplating the surrounding ruins, Julia invoked them, as it were, to fall on her head. With what joy would she have purchased, even at the expense of a grievous accident, the certainty of passing another month under the same roof with Felix! With what a longing eye did she contemplate, as she walked on the edge of the platform, the depths below! With what in-

trepidity did she choose the most dangerous passages, in the secret hope her foot might slip, and enable her, in conscience, and without artifice, to dispense with obedience to her father's orders.

The two lovers decided on the expedient of a feigned indisposition, hoping thus to gain a few days at least. Meanwhile they flattered themselves some new event might occur; they reckoned on fortune and all the chances of futurity; they trusted to the vague feeling of hope, which lay at the bottom of their hearts, and for which they were indebted to love, to youth, and principally to the pleasure of seeing each other after what they called a long absence.

Cold viands and some wine had been brought from Noviliacum; Eudoxus took care to arrange the repast, and to spread it on the platform, where they at first met, and whence they commanded a most extensive prospect. Julia no longer refused to admire the beauty of the landscape; she directed her eyes towards the distant objects pointed out to her, and listened to the dissertations and anecdotes of Eudoxus: all that she saw, Felix saw also; all that excited any sensation in her, excited a corresponding sensation in the heart of Felix. He was questioned about all he had seen, all he had done at Sois-

sons; Julia and Sylvia, in their turn, told the history of their solitude, described their excursion to the banks of the Cher, the terrors they had experienced in the castle of Rutilianus, and Julia related her extraordinary vision. While she was speaking, Felix appeared to devour her lightest words; he was jealous of the breathing of the winds, the buzzing of the insects, the slightest noise which caused him to lose even one of the gentlest inflexions of her harmonious voice.

A happy confidence, a hope, the motives of which they could not explain, had sprung up in the hearts of both. This day, beyond which they saw no futurity, had passed with them a day of happiness; and though they had not succeeded in deciding upon one single project truly rational, they could not bring themselves to believe that such ecstatic bliss would ever end. The approaching sun-set, however, warned them to return. The rowers called them to the boat, while Diocles held the horse of Felix, who was to return by land, in order that the suspicion of Sulpitia might not be excited, for they expected to find her at Noviliacum. The moment was come when they were to bid farewell to the ruins of Hesodunum, and with aching hearts the two lovers descended from the platform.

In the direction of the Loire, the citadel communicated with the town beneath by a subterraneous vault, hewn in the living rock. This work was anterior to the Roman buildings, and belonged to the ancient Celtic fortress, the site of which was occupied by the towers of Augustus. A wide spiral staircase led to the centre of the largest tower, and opened on one of the extremities of the vault, which, passing under the ruins of part of the town, had its other opening at a small distance above the port, where their pinnacle was waiting. By this vault, a remarkable monument of the power and perseverance of the ancient Carnuti, our travellers intended to regain the strand. Sylvia gave her arm to Eudoxus, and Julia walked slowly behind with Felix. Both had a secret foreboding that this, perhaps, was their last uncontrolled interview, that they soon would be observed, mistrustfully watched, and perhaps separated for ever. They involuntarily stopped, thinking they never could say all they wished to each other; they forcibly clung to these last moments of happiness, which were so soon to be ravished from them. Although Sylvia walked slowly, she was already at a considerable distance before them. At different times she had turned to hasten their steps. When arrived at

the opening of the vault she turned back for the last time to call them; what was her astonishment, her horror, when she saw the long cavern closed behind her!

She ran with Eudoxus towards the obstacle which interrupted her sight; it was not a gate, but an enormous mass of rock, which, wheeling on a pivot by means of invisible springs, opened or closed the cavern, according as it was turned to the side or the front, and fitted so closely into the opening that the eye could not distinguish it from the solid mass of which it seemed a part. This rock could be moved in the interior with so much facility by those who knew its secret springs, that Sylvia had not even heard the noise it made in closing. But, destined in the time of the Celts to secure their fortress, it offered an insurmountable resistance to those who wished to push it back to its former position, so that in the different sieges Hesodunum had stood, the efforts of the enemy had never been able to force it.

Sylvia and Eudoxus called with all their might, requesting Felix to explain this strange accident, and tell them what assistance they could give him; but no voice, no sound, could pierce the thickness of the rock; no answer

could be heard. They, however, supposed that Felix and Julia, seeing the vault closed, would return and soon make their appearance at the upper gate of the castle. The boatmen, who had assembled at the shrieks of Sylvia, advanced towards that gate to meet them: they hurried on with vague feelings of anxiety, while Sylvia remained on the spot whence she had just seen her children disappear, and where she still hoped soon to hear their voice, and learn what she should do for their assistance.

The boatmen made great speed, but the expectation of their return was to Sylvia a never-ending delay. She leant her ear to the rock, then advanced towards the extremity of the pier, whence she could see the upper gate of the castle; but meanwhile she left Eudoxus listening, in order that the slightest sound uttered in the depths of the cavern might not escape them.

At length the boatmen reappeared; they were speaking in an agitated manner with Dumnorix and Diocles, who were returning in their company; the paleness of the two latter, and the horror imprinted on their countenances, announced to Sylvia that none of the fears she had conceived were exaggerated.

“The upper opening of the vault is also closed,” said Diocles; “we have seen neither Felix nor Julia.”

At the same time he approached the rock, examined it with attention, took in his hand a link, which one of the boatmen had just lighted, directed the flame against all the points where the rock and cavern were joined; then, shaking his head, laid the torch on the ground: “there is not a crevice,” said he, “in which to thrust a lever; we might overturn the mountain sooner than shake this rock!”

“And the upper gate,” said Sylvia, with increasing anxiety—

“That is also fastened in the inside by a rock. It is not the first time I have seen the gates of the Druids. At the siege of Aútun we attacked a party who had taken refuge in just such a vault: the unfortunate wretches would not open it, or perhaps were not able to do so when they wished: they preferred perishing with hunger to yielding. At the end of a week, when our miners gained an entrance into the vault they found them all dead.”

“Good heavens!” cried Sylvia, with horror, “is it possible the gates closed by accident?”

“I think not—at least, they would not both have closed at the same time.”

“Who then can have shut them?”

“Some one, I suppose, who was watching you in the guard-rooms, which probably are hewn in the rock above these fatal gates.”

They now sought some traces of this supposed ambush; they interrogated all the attendants of the travellers, eight boatmen and four or five servants. Diocles and Dumnorix had passed nearly the whole day in the ruins of Hesodunum. Neither of them had seen a living soul, neither of them had even observed the recent footsteps of man.

But Dumnorix had formerly fed his flocks in the neighbourhood of these ruins, and during the heat of mid-day had more than once sought shelter in the caverns. He said he distinctly remembered that the vaults did not consist of one single straight avenue; but had several branches forming a sort of labyrinth in these catacombs. He moreover asserted that he had seen them at times both open and shut, and that in the very place where on one day nothing was to be found but a solid rock, on the following might be seen an opening leading to a great distance, sometimes even to the bank of the Loire.

“These vaults,” said he, “are the only remaining temple consecrated to our ancient divinities, and now that the Roman laws do not

“permit the Druids to keep guard around the
“caverns of Hesus and Taranes, the gods them-
“selves open and shut the gates according to
“their own good pleasure.”

“Say rather,” replied Diocles, “that they are
“opened and shut by men who profit by the
“dread the name of the Druids still inspires.”

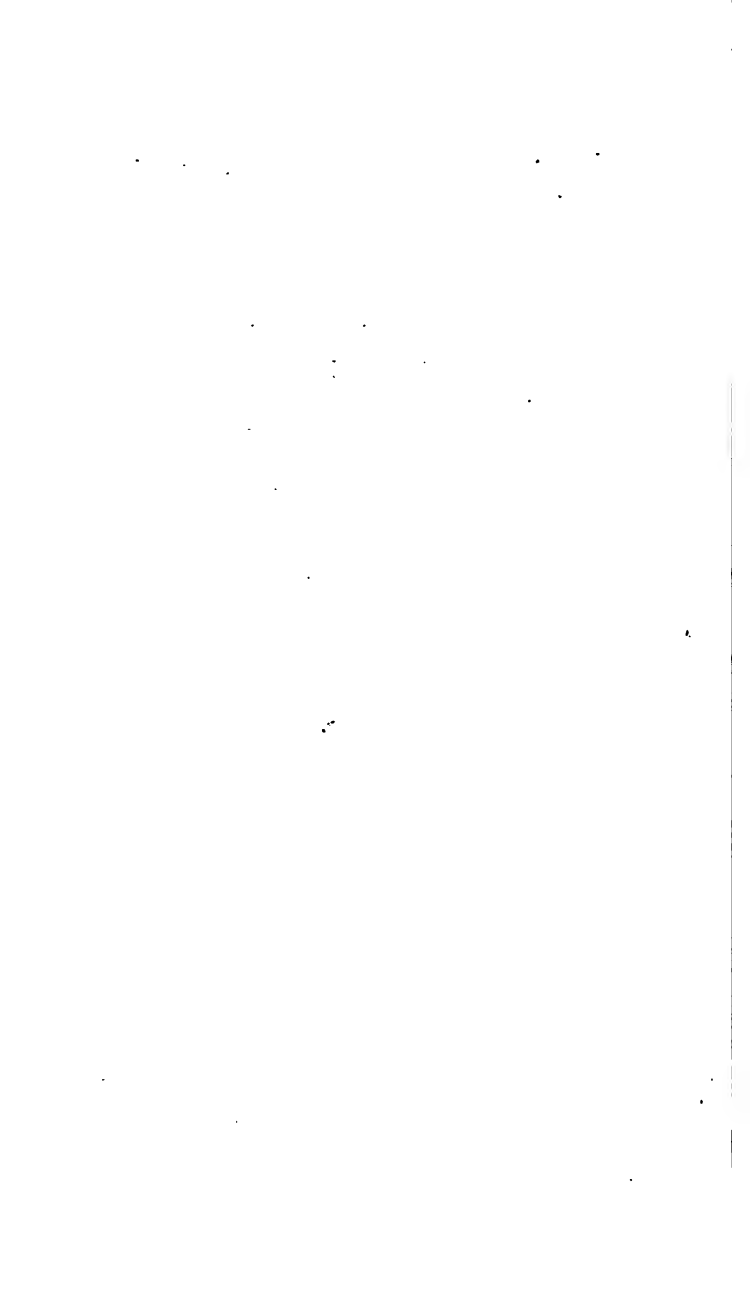
“In God’s name,” said Sylvia, “into whose
“hands can my son have fallen?”

“These caverns probably serve as a refuge for
“the *bagaudæ*, or some fugitive slaves,” replied
Diocles.

“What can they have to demand of my
“son?”

“Either revenge or ransom.”

The first part of this alternative was the most
terrific; the boatmen and the attendants who ac-
companied Sylvia, were immediately questioned,
in order to ascertain whether any one of the
slaves in the different establishments of Inter-
amnes was missing; whether any had expressed
resentment against Felix, or whether they could
be imagined capable of such atrocious revenge.
All their answers were tranquillizing, all united
in the praise of Felix, and all declared their de-
votion to his service. These declarations, which
appeared sincere, removed from Sylvia the two
most dreadful apprehensions which had taken

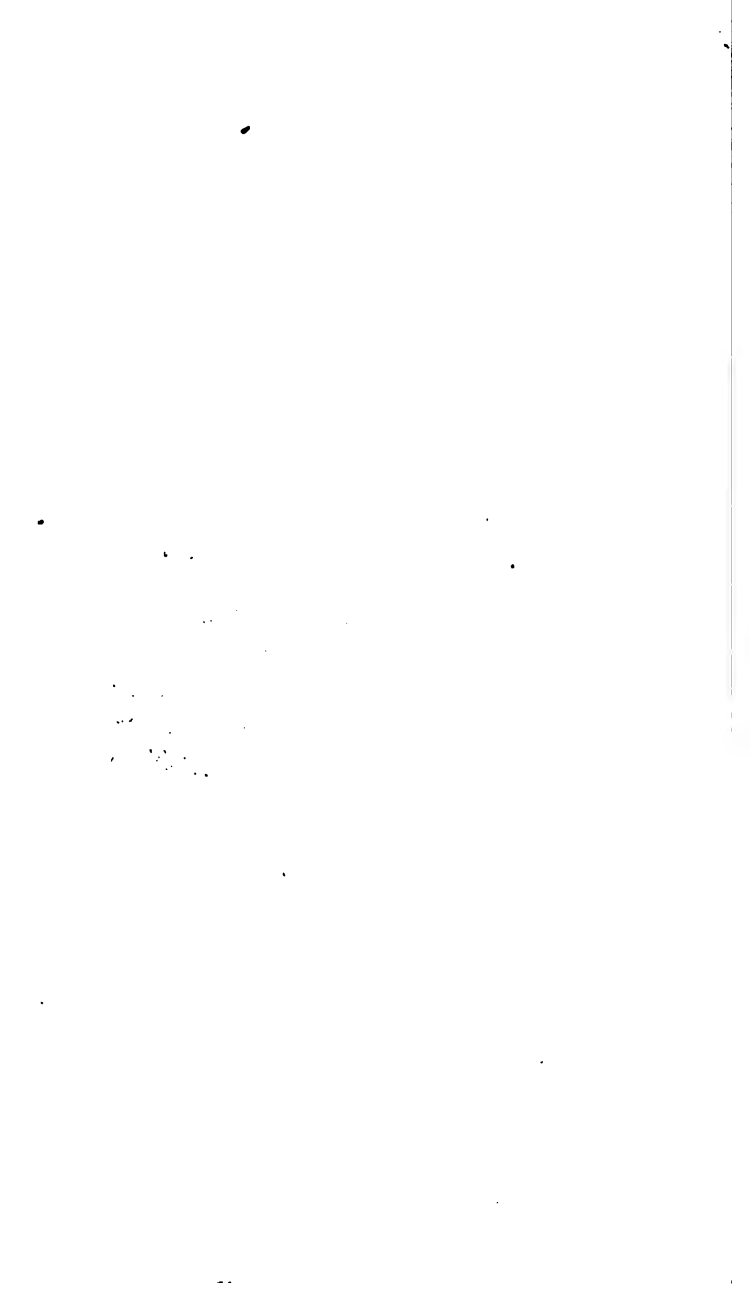


JULIA SEVERA;

OR THE

Year Four Hundred and Ninety-two.

VOL. II.



JULIA SEVERA;

OR THE

Year Four Hundred and Ninety-two;

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

J. C. L. SIMONDE DE SISMONDI,

**AUTHOR OF NEW PRINCIPLES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY;
THE HISTORY OF FRANCE, THE ITALIAN REPUBLICS OF
THE MIDDLE AGE, THE LITERATURE OF THE SOUTH OF
EUROPE, &c.**

IN TWO VOLUMES.

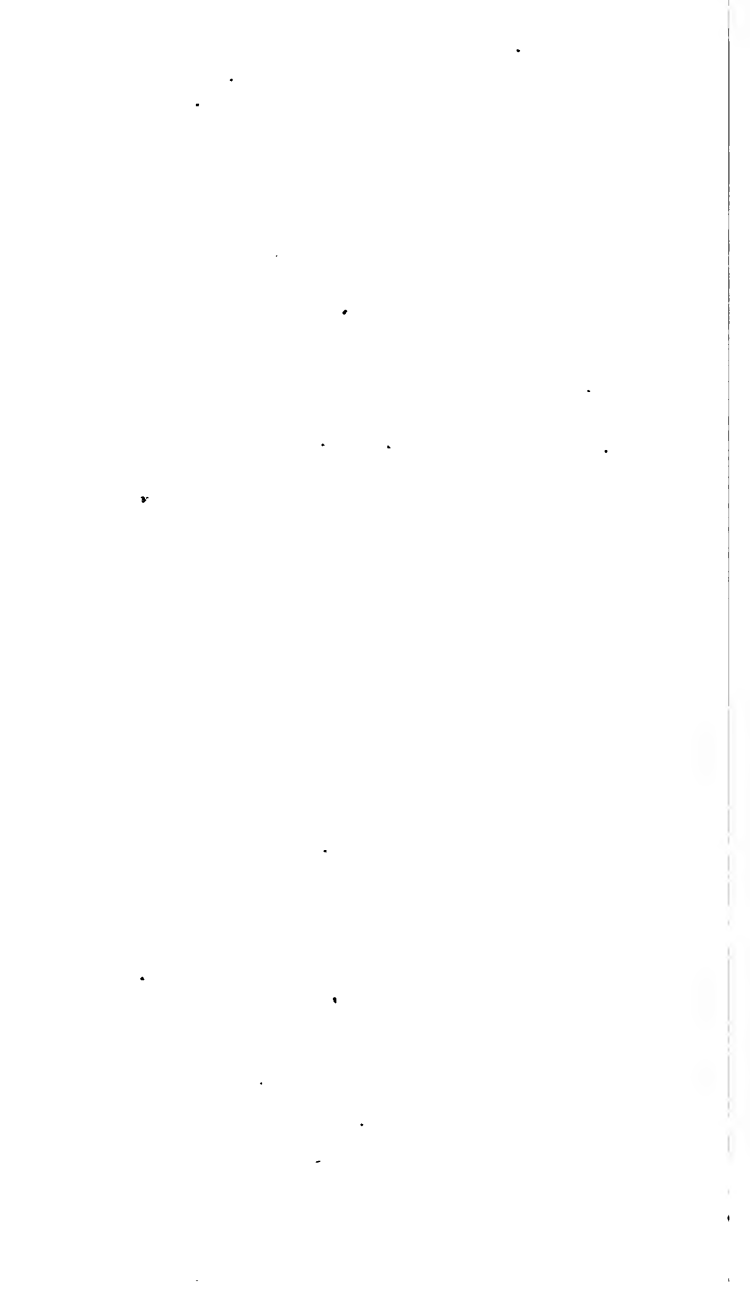


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CHAP. I.

AN UNSUCCESSFUL SEARCH.

"This spot was so secret and retired, that no hermitage was ever so solitary; for on one side it was bounded by the rugged rocks of a lofty mountain; on the other by the Loire, which rolled its stream round this small plain. There was only one way of access, and that was narrow and difficult.—The greater part of the monks had their cells in excavations hewn in the stone of this mountain."—*Sulpitius Severus—Life of St. Martin, cap. 7. v. 574.*

SYLVIA had not spoken a word or moved from the spot; her veil was lowered, and, whether she sought to tranquillize her troubled mind by prayer; or, whether on the contrary, she traced in her imagination all the dreadful conjectures that might explain the strange event to which she was obliged to submit, she seemed to have renounced all communication with exterior objects.

Eudoxus loved Sylvia and Felix sincerely; that is, as much as he possibly could love any

other than himself: he was, therefore, deeply afflicted and much terrified; but his grief for others could not make him lose sight of his own comforts; and although bewailing the danger to which his patron was exposed, he yet felt a certain portion of regret at the idea that Sylvia's determination would compel him to pass the night without supper or bed; for he knew very well that it was his duty to watch near her person. He had, consequently, taken his seat by her side, and while she remained immoveable, wrapt in her veil, and apparently, deaf to all he said, he recited to her, with endless volubility, all the finest passages he could bring to his recollection from Seneca's *Treatise de Consolatione* and Marcus Aurelius *de Magnitudine Animi*; but on the approach of evening, when he felt the humid atmosphere around him, his uneasiness on his own account, his dread of the rheumatic pains he should be exposed to, the chill of the night, want of sleep, and the comfortless situation in which he was placed, drove from his mind all classical consolation, and blunted his eloquence. In vain did he endeavour to persuade Sylvia to choose some other place of rest for the night. Not being able to obtain any reply from her, he began to address Diocles, Dumnorix, the boatmen, and the slaves,

explaining to them how much he dreaded the danger to which their mistress must be exposed by thus passing the night in the open air; but Diocles and Dumnorix, themselves buried in sorrowful meditation, replied by monosyllables only, and Sylvia appeared as inaccessible to this last indirect attack, as before she had been to his persuasive efforts.

Seeing, at last, the necessity of making up his mind to pass the night at the gate of the cavern, he arose, sighing deeply, and began to give orders for rendering their watch more supportable. The rock which closed the vault was at least fifteen feet distant from its entrance, so that they were sheltered under a kind of portico. The boat in which they had arrived was abundantly provided with mattresses, cushions, carpets, and saddle-cloths; Eudoxus had them all brought to the cavern, together with the saddles of three horses, which were allowed to graze in full liberty through the forsaken streets of the city. After having wrapt Sylvia, who seemed insensible to his attention, in carpets and mantles, he prepared for himself a sort of bed, in which, laying his head on one of the saddles, and covering his body with the sails of the boat, he not only shielded himself from the cold and the wet, but also hoped to escape being seen, should

the *bagaudæ* make a sudden rush, and surprise them.

There was still one thing wanted to complete their nocturnal establishment; — no one had thought of supper. Luckily there yet remained some provisions in the boat; Eudoxus sent for them; he seated Diocles, Dumnorix, the boatmen and the slaves around a large fire at the entrance of the cavern, and intreated them not to remove thence even for an instant: he encouraged them to eat and drink, in order that they might not be weak and incapable of defence, should they be attacked; and raising his head and arms above the heap of sails, cloaks, and carpets which covered him, he was the first to put his hand in the dish, and, sighing deeply, gave them the example of recruiting their strength.

The night was dark; and of the vast ruins of Hesodunum nothing could be discerned but the lofty towers and battlements, which appeared traced in the horizon. At times was heard the shriek or rather the fluttering breath of the screechowl, on the tower where she had built her nest. Of all the sounds which reached our travellers, this was the only one that belonged to life; but the whistling of the wind, the rustling of the leaves and agitated branches, and the murmuring of the river, struck their ears with

varied force, and sometimes sounded like plaintive voices, which they fancied might proceed from the depth of the caverns. The boatmen were speaking in a low voice, and relating in turn the strange depredations of the *bagaudæ*, the horrid deeds of revenge committed by fugitive slaves, or other adventures still more terrific; in which the spirits of hell, the gods of paganism, those of the Druids, and the saints of the newly-established worship, bore a principal part; but when they heard these noises they suddenly stopt; they listened with anxiety, and endeavoured to trace the origin of the sound which struck their ears; and when they had discovered its cause, they resumed their tales in a lower tone, and with a voice more tremulous. Eudoxus, who could not sleep, listened, shuddering, to these different stories. Lying almost on the ground, with his head grotesquely wrapped in napkins, he crawled to the circle formed by the boatmen around the fire, but, like an affrighted tortoise which draws back its head under its shell at the least noise, he retired with rapidity, and disappeared under the heap of sails and cushions, which concealed him from the eyes of all.

Dumnorix and Diocles, both of whom were accustomed to live constantly in the open air,

the one tending his flocks, and the other in the army, amid more real dangers, were much less susceptible of fears which related to themselves alone; but, on the other hand, they were much more deeply affected by the event which kept them on this spot. The love of Diocles for his master, and of Dumnorix for his mistress, was, in both, the strongest and deepest of their feelings. Their greater experience made them conceive more fully the extent of the danger; and though they did not know whither to direct their conjectures, they could see full well that so extraordinary an event could be referred only to some most horrible cause.

A considerable part of the night had already elapsed, when the boat returned from the camp of the legionaries, bringing about twenty workmen, soldiers or sons of soldiers, with pickaxes, mallets, chisels, and other tools, for opening a mine. Sylvia was reanimated by their approach; she gave up the place she had hitherto occupied, and Diocles immediately set the men to work; she encouraged them by the most pressing entreaties, and the most brilliant promises. But in this narrow passage, it was impossible for more than four workmen to labour at the same time, and the excessive hardness of the stone, of which but small parts could be chipped off at

once, proved that many days must pass ere an entrance could be effected.

The having begun the work was, however, in some degree consolatory: the strokes of the mallet seemed to revive Sylvia's courage; as long as she saw something to be done, the vigour of her mind supported her; she remained no longer immoveable and silent; but with her usual presence of mind, gave orders that the work should be continued without intermission by companies of labourers, who should relieve each other in the night as well as in the day: she expressed her intention of sojourning at Hesodunum with all her attendants until an entrance was effected. Eudoxus, who had been obliged to give up his place, stood wrapt in mantles, one placed over the other, leaning against the entrance to the cavern: he also felt revived by the arrival of the workmen, and in his turn gave advice relative to the establishing in some of the houses in the vicinity a more comfortable shelter for the following day and night.

At the first dawn of day another boat, descending the Loire, touched at the port of Hesodunum, and the first passenger who leapt on shore was the Count Julius Severus. Uneasy at the delay of Sulpitia, whose dresses were not yet finished; alarmed at the intrigues of those

who destined Clotilda for Clovis, and who had succeeded in exciting against him the resentment of the barbarian king, in consequence of his not bringing his daughter sooner to the court; dreading also the interview of Julia with Felix, and observing in a letter he had just received from his daughter certain expressions which raised in his mind the first suspicion of a mutual affection, he had departed in haste from Soissons, for the purpose of fetching her himself, and at midnight he reached Noviliacum. The absence of Julia, that of Felix, whom he had not overtaken on the road, and who, nevertheless, had not yet arrived, began already to increase his anxiety and discontent. He concluded that the two young people had met at Hesodunum, and, even in that case, he could not guess why they were not yet returned, when the arrival of the express, sent by Sylvia for assistance, plunged him into the deepest grief. He could not understand the event related to him; he knew not whether his daughter had fallen into an abyss amid the ruins; whether she had lost her way in the subterraneous labyrinths, or whether she had been carried off by robbers: he could only discern that the danger was extreme, and as soon as the labourers Sylvia had sent for were ready, he departed with them.

The explanation between Severus and Sylvia was brief; both buried in sorrow were sparing of words. But as soon as the Count of Chartres had heard what had happened, he desired he might be shewn all the entrances to the vault. Dumnorix acted as a guide, and they were followed by all the workmen who had just arrived, but who could not be set to work for want of room. The entrance which communicated with a large tower, and another which led to the country, were still closed; but when Dumnorix arrived at the third, which he had discovered beneath Hesodunum, and close to the bank of the Loire, he was surprised at finding it open. At the same time he remarked on the sand of the river, and shewed to the count, several footsteps and deep cuts on the strand, such as would be made by the keel of a boat pushed ashore.

These footsteps caused them to suspect that the ravishers had retired with their prey; but they possibly might indicate that during the night a reinforcement had arrived and joined the first band. Severus, therefore, deemed it prudent to use great precaution ere he entered the vault—indeed such as soldiers would take were they marching on a military expedition. Every one, and particularly the legionaries, felt

the necessity of having a commander, whom alone they might obey; every one felt the superior experience, intelligence, and coolness of Diocles: his authority was, therefore, acknowledged by the whole body, which united, amounted to nearly fifty persons. The senator, Eudoxus, and Sylvia promised to obey him; and the veteran was obliged to make use of his power in preventing the latter from rushing instantly into the cavern.

Diocles first stopped with wedges the rock which served as a gate to the vault; he then studied the mechanism by which it could be opened and shut. He recognised the narrow pass by which, on jutting stones, they could ascend to the small excavation which he had before called the guard-room; and he convinced himself that within that room, and provided with a light, he should find no difficulty in opening or closing these dreadful druidical gates, to the pivot of which levers were fastened for the purpose of turning the rock.

After leaving a guard at this first gate, he advanced to the interior of the cavern, stopping as often as he found any side branch, fastening all the doors, and leaving a guard. Advancing to the extremity of each avenue, and opening the gate, the catacombs appeared much less exten-

sive, and much less complicated, than imagination and fear had represented them. The strata of hard rock were separated by others of marl, and in these latter the Celtic miners had formed their excavations. The whole extent was composed of five low and narrow avenues and three large halls. In one of these Diocles observed some trusses of straw, on which men had been lately lying; the remnants of their repast, their fire and torches were still to be seen, but they found no inhabitant. After five hours' labour, the catacombs had been thoroughly examined, all the recesses had been scrutinized, and the entrances opened; so that no doubt remained of Julia, Felix, and their ravishers having departed.

Severus, Sylvia, Eudoxus, Diocles, Dumnox, and the most intelligent among those who had seconded them, formed, when the search was ended, a sort of council of war, to advise mutually on the result. It appeared certain that the captives had been carried off during the night in the boat whose marks had been seen on the sand. But had the ravishers only crossed the river for the purpose of concealing themselves in the woods which covered the opposite bank? Had they dared to continue their navigation and approach Tours, at the risk of

being observed from both banks, which, in the neighbourhood of that town, were somewhat more frequented. This could only be ascertained by minute examination of all the landing places on both banks of the river. All felt themselves fatigued with their own conjectures, and those of the soldiers, who had assisted them in their researches. Their minds could fix on nothing; they wandered in endless doubt; but though they were now certain that the objects of their affection were much farther removed from them than they at first supposed, yet they felt their sorrow somewhat alleviated by knowing they were not immured in these vaults.

A longer stay at Hesodunum would not have brought them nearer the objects of their research, and Sylvia, with agonizing grief, consented to re-embark, and to return to Noviliacum, left of her son and youthful friend. Before they quitted the shore, the proper measures were taken to continue actively the search they had commenced. A post of legionaries was left at Hesodunum, for the purpose of surprising the ravishers, in case any of them should return to the cavern. Two companies of the same soldiers, under the orders of Diocles, descended along both sides of the Loire, observing minutely the sand at the bank, and seeking the marks of dis-

embarkation. Messengers were sent in all directions, inquiries were made at all the villages, and rewards offered to any one who would furnish tidings of the captives. Dumnorix also departed in order to call on the shepherds of the neighbourhood; if a party of the *bagaudeæ* had advanced to the Loire, he did not fear to assert that these shepherds would have some knowledge thereof; for they must have met them in the woods, and it was they who generally furnished the robbers with provisions. After taking all these precautions, Julius Severus, Sylvia, and Eudoxus embarked for Noviliacum, with a feeling of deep sorrow and bitter anxiety, which could not, however be compared to the agony of despair in which Sylvia had been immersed when she was first informed that all the entrances to the cavern were closed.

The seizure of a landholder, a traveller, a magistrate, sometimes by one of those bands of barbarians who ravaged all parts of the empire, at other times by those rebellious and fugitive peasants, inhabitants of the woods, who were called *bagaudeæ*, was at this period an event so frequent, that in spite of the terrible consequences that might ensue, the imagination had accustomed itself thereto; for the sorrow felt at a great catastrophe is proportionate rather to

the astonishment, than to the evil it causes. At the same time that the mind was familiarised with the idea of this misfortune, it was also prepared for the remedies that might be applied. It was known that, generally speaking, these deeds were done with no other view than to obtain a heavy ransom for the captives; it was also known to be the interest of the robbers themselves to shew how the captives might be recovered, and where the money should be placed for their deliverance; so that Severus and Sylvia were not without hopes of receiving some tidings of their children before the end of the day.

The day passed at Noviliacum in seeing the successive return of the messengers who had been despatched in all directions. Each brought with him promises of zeal and vigilance from the persons to whom he had been sent; but they all arrived without having seen or heard anything of the young people; the shepherds had no knowledge of the approach of any *bagaudæ*, the legionaries had not observed any marks of landing on the sand, the inhabitants of the banks of the Loire had seen no boat pass by.

Thus disappointed in all their hopes, nothing remained but sorrow and despondency. Sylvia, worn out by the excess of her anguish, had been carried to her apartment, where an attack of de-

lirious fever rendered it impossible for her to see any one. Julius Severus silently paced the lofty halls of the castle, agitated by grief and fear; Endoxus expressed alternately his alarm for the danger to which his patron was exposed, and his dread of the rheumatism, to which he had exposed himself by sleeping in the open air. The priest Martin was sullen and silent; sometimes he scowled on Julius Severus, and muttered his prayers that the innocent might not be involved in the chastisements of the wicked.

When the last messenger, despatched by Diocles, whose arrival had been awaited with the greatest anxiety, informed them that all the researches made on the banks of the Loire had been unsuccessful, Julius Severus ordered a guide and some horses to be got ready, and having passed a few sleepless hours on a couch, he departed before break of day to the temple of Pan. The Romans who remained attached to the ancient mythology, were, by a spirit of opposition, become more religious than their ancestors; their philosophers had given a mystic signification, to the gross fables which before disgusted sensible men; eternal truths were now thought to be, as it were, veiled under certain allegories, rendered venerable by their antiquity; several sages, the ornament of the schools of

portunity of shedding that blood which for a long time had not flowed on the altars of Pan. While her son was gone with the money of Severus to purchase a white heifer from the neighbouring herdsmen, she requested the count of Chartres to detail all he had himself seen at Hesodunum, all he had learnt from Eudoxus, not only respecting this last accident, but respecting the whole of Julia's residence at Noviliacum; she put questions relative to her former excursions, made minute inquiries concerning her vision in the castle of Rutilianus, to which she appeared to attach the utmost interest and attention; and even wished to know the behaviour of priest Martin, both when Severus first arrived at Noviliacum, and when, after the catastrophe, he returned with Sylvia. The count of Chartres was much surprised at the shrewdness evinced by Lamia in this chain of questions, though she avoided giving any opinion: he was also struck by the stress she seemed to lay on circumstances which he had considered unworthy of attention.

The victim, led by Lamia's son, arrived at the temple of Pan: the sacrifice was performed according to the ancient rites; libations were poured forth, not only in honour of the god to whom the temple was consecrated, but also in honour

of all the gods of Olympus. The horns, the hair, and the entrails of the victim were consumed on the altar; and Lamia, descending into the cavern, the entrance to which she had denied Felix, placed herself on a tripod, which stood over a chasm, whence arose at times a mephitical exhalation. After remaining in this situation a few minutes, she, by a sign, ordered her son to introduce Severus.

When the count of Chartres entered the cave he fancied he could perceive the hoary Pythoness wrestling with the god who now possessed her. Her eyes were animated, and almost infuriate, her white tresses stood erect; she panted as if breathing with difficulty; she wrung her hands and tottered on the tripod, from which she would perhaps have fallen had not her son rushed to her support. When she saw Severus, she exclaimed—"Worthy imitator of
"the august Julian, beware of the priests of
"the new god! Beware of our pursuers, those
"hungry dogs called monks! Thy daughter
"is in their hands; she is hidden in one of
"their infernal prisons; she is in the power
"of him of thine enemies, who hateth and
"feareth thee most—beware lest, to conceal
"her from thy search, he bury her in the

“tomb!—Enough; I can no more.” Her son now lifted her from the tripod, and carried her into the open air; her lips were covered with foam; her eyes were closed, and some time elapsed before she recovered her senses. Being then too much debilitated to attend to others, she ordered her son to place her on the bed, and Severus departed for Noviliacum.

This oracle gave a new direction to the conjectures and suspicions of Julius Severus. It was true that Lamia's hatred for the priests of the new worship might, in spite of herself, somewhat influence her revelations; but still he thought those priests had a greater interest in carrying off his daughter than the *bagauda*. These latter sought only to escape; the priests sought to reign. The *bagauda* had scarcely a place on which to lay their heads; the monks had, in every part of Gaul, impenetrable holds: they were all bound by one and the same interest, and the intrigues to prevent the marriage of Julia with Clovis, which Severus had discovered at Soissons, might probably be connected with the atrocious deed committed on the borders of the Loire.

On his arrival at Noviliacum, an epistle from the Bishop Volusianus to Sylvia, which was

communicated to him, increased, rather than destroyed his suspicions. It was couched in the following terms :

“ *Volusianus, the servant of the servants of God, to the*
“ *pious matron, Sylvia Numantia, GREETING.* .

“ We have learnt by your messenger, and
“ have bewailed with tears of charity and com-
“ miseration, the grief you feel at the disappear-
“ ance of your son. We have also seen that
“ you suspect he has been carried off by some
“ *bagaudæ*, or other ruffians who were hidden
“ in the profane ruins of Hesodunum, the idol-
“ atry of which hath been punished by the Al-
“ mighty. We have in consequence thereof
“ given our orders, that should any men of this
“ description be seen in our holy city of Tours,
“ they may be arrested and even interrogated
“ by torture, in order to discover where the
“ illustrious Felix Florentius is to be found.
“ May you then open your heart to consolation,
“ and revive your hopes. Let us meanwhile
“ exhort you to remember that it is written
“ *thou shalt not hold communion with the un-*
“ *godly.* The idolater brings ruin and desola-
“ tion, not only on himself, but on the house into
“ which he hath entered. We offer up our
“ prayers to the Almighty and to the glorious

“ Confessor, St. Martin, that your son may not
“ be comprised in the judgment which heaven
“ hath pronounced against the favourers of the
“ abomination of idols. As we shall remember
“ you and him in our prayers, do you remember
“ the lights which burn night and day before
“ the sepulchre of the holy Confessor; for cha-
“ rity given to the priests of the Lord and the
“ ministers of his temple, blotteth out a multi-
“ tude of sins,”

CHAP. II.

THE CAPTIVES.

.....LATERROSA VAGIS RIMATUR HABENIS
DEVIA, FRATERNUM CUPiens EXIRE SUB ORBEM.
JANUA NULLA PATET. PROHIBEBANT UNDIQUE RUPES
OPPOSITÆ; DURAQUE DEUM COMPAGE TENEBANT.

Claudiani, de Raptu Proserpinæ, lib. ii. p. 44.

“ He examines these caverns without an issue to find an
“ approach to the world illumined by the day ; but no gate
“ is open to him : opposing rocks arrest him on all sides, and
“ offer to him an insurmountable barrier.”

The Author's Translation.

WE left the two lovers walking together in the vaults of Hesodunum. Julia was repeating to Felix for the tenth time, with increased liveliness of expression and animation of tone, that the military fame of Clovis inspired her with horror alone ; that his power recalled to her memory only the oppression of her country, and that the person of the conqueror, of which so flattering a portrait had been drawn, did not lessen her dislike to him, when, suddenly,

the light which proceeded from the opening of the cavern, and towards which they were both advancing, was no longer visible, and nearly at the same instant the glimmering rays behind them, proceeding from the steps by which they had ascended, also disappeared. Not a beam of light now illumined the cavern, and the two lovers were unable to discover what direction they should take.

Felix at first imagined that the slaves, sporting with each other, and supposing their master to be out of the cave, had closed the gates to terrify or teaze some of their companions. He raised his voice, ordering them to open the passage, making known that he was in the interior; but he received no answer. He shouted still louder, but without success. "Those scoundrels," said he, "cannot hear us, we must open the gate ourselves, or we shall be obliged to wait until my mother, perceiving our absence, gives orders to the slaves."

Julia was not subject to idle fears; and never had she felt herself less disposed to be alarmed than now, when supported by the arm of Felix. Both advanced in the dark, feeling their way, but, at the same time, laughing at the odd adventure; they kept close to the sides of the rock, the unevenness of which made them sometimes

deviate from a straight line, and therefore led them to believe they were straying from the right path. At length they arrived at the extremity of the cavern, where they fancied they should find a door, but what was their astonishment when they found their passage barred by a rock! In vain did they feel for some obstacle in wood, which might be moveable; they found on all sides stone, presenting to them an impervious wall.

“Doubtless,” said Felix, “instead of walking directly towards the gates, we must have entered some recess in the rock, or some gallery with no passage outwards; we must return, take the wall on the left, proceed in that direction, and we shall soon be guided by a ray of light.”

They returned, feeling their way by the side of the rock, and endeavouring to walk in a direct line. Felix continued, however, to assure Julia there was not the slightest cause for fear; that his mother, on finding they did not make their appearance, would instantly cause the cavern to be opened, and search to be made for them with torches should they have strayed from the direct path. But, in his own mind he felt astonished that she had not already commenced her researches. Although he did not

yet feel any positive fear, he began to be alarmed; he felt for Julia, his expressions became more concise, and his voice more hurried. Julia on her part, spoke but little, and answered by monosyllables only.

Nevertheless they continued advancing, Felix supporting Julia, and keeping his hand constantly on the sides of the wall; but they now proceeded in an opposite direction to the opening of the vault, which they had at first approached. Suddenly Julia felt herself seized by the arm and shaken violently, in order to wrest her from Felix; she uttered a piercing cry; Felix, aroused by the shriek and by the efforts she made to retain her hold of him, sprang to the side he found they were dragging her. His hands met those of another man; he seized him, raised him in his arms, and then threw him on the ground, falling on him at the same time. His adversary was robust, and they were struggling, when another shriek from Julia warned him that other enemies had siezed her person, and were endeavouring to carry her off. "Whoever thou art," said he "to his adversary, holding him by the throat, "thou art a dead man unless thou command "thy comrades to desist and give that lady her "liberty."

“ Penitence, my son, penitence, and submission to the will of God, or thou shalt perish with the ungodly !” said the unknown individual, as soon as Felix loosed his grasp.

“ Wretched hypocrite,” retorted Felix, squeezing his throat with double violence, “ thou thyself shalt first perish unless thou instantly obey my order.”

“ Stop, my brethren :” cried the unknown, and those who held Julia obeyed. “ Young man,” continued he, “ thou art rushing to thine own destruction. Thy companion is already bound in the inextricable chain of sin ; for her there is no salvation, unless she do penance in the house of the Lord. As for thee, thou wert to have seen again the joyous light of day. But know thou hast met thy ruin by striking me, an unworthy priest of the living God. Thou hast thus incurred excommunication, and,” he added, raising his voice with peculiar emphasis, “ it is meet that what is bound in heaven should be bound on earth also.”

These words indirectly addressed to the companions of the priest, served probably to indicate what they were to do ; for he had scarcely pronounced them, when, two other men, who had approached at the noise made by Felix, roughly seized him by the arms, extricated the

priest from under him, and pinioned his hands behind his back. The priest, as soon as he arose, demanded a light; a man then appeared with a torch in his hand, coming from an excavation above the gate, whence he descended by some steps roughly hewn in the rock. The link he brought with him shewed Felix and Julia the strange persons into whose hands they had fallen.

The priest who had been thrown on the ground by Felix appeared to give orders to the others; his physiognomy did not bear those marks of gross stupidity or blind fanaticism, which Felix expected to find in the agent of such a deed. His features were noble, they expressed fervour, accompanied with somewhat of severity, but not untintured with compassion. He appeared to be about fifty years of age; his beard was flowing, and his shoulders were covered with the habit of the penitents, but the cowl was not drawn over his head. Two men, entirely clothed in the same garb, their faces concealed, held Julia fast; two others had seized Felix by the arms. Besides these and the one who carried the torch, others were seen arriving from the extremities of the cavern. All had their cowls drawn closely over their faces, excepting the first, who, for some moments remained silent, apparently wishing to give his captives

time to resume their presence of mind, to examine his person, and thereby judge into what hands they had fallen, and to convince themselves of the folly of resistance. He then spoke:

“ You have had the misfortune, Felix, to
“ strike a priest, but you knew him not; you
“ were taken by surprise, you thought only of
“ defending yourself: I hope this horrid sin
“ will be forgiven as I forgive you. But re-
“ collect you are under the ban of excommu-
“ nication; your first object must be to obtain
“ absolution. Heaven hath already punished
“ you by giving you the advantage in this
“ struggle; better would it be for you had you
“ been vanquished. Then would you have
“ avoided the painful contest you are now
“ called to engage in: the daughter of the
“ idolater would have been wrested from you
“ without your being obliged to contract an en-
“ gagement which I know is repugnant to your
“ worldly prejudices. This your violence hath
“ not permitted; the orders I have received, now
“ leave me no choice: you, as well as herself,
“ are to be conducted to a religious asylum,
“ and there remain until you have bound your-
“ self by a solemn oath never to reveal what is
“ become of her.”

“ Woe to him,” exclaimed Felix, “ that could
“ pledge so execrable an oath !”

The priest cast on him a look of compassion, but replied not. "You, daughter of Severus," said he, turning to Julia, "you have fallen into the hands of the ministers of that God against whom you have rebelled, into the hands of those ministers whom you were preparing to persecute by once more rearing the altars of paganism; but, my daughter, lose not your courage; these ministers are more indulgent than you imagine: they will open your eyes to the light of truth, they will call your soul to the joys of eternity. The time shall come when you will thank me for having rescued you from the pomp of wickedness, and for hindering you from encircling your brows with a diadem, presented by ensanguined hands."

"I know not," replied Julia, "who can give you the right either to question my conscience, or to attempt my liberty; but if I am to believe your words, you are much mistaken respecting me. I am a Christian as well as yourself."

"You a Christian!" replied the priest in a tone of disbelief, "those like yourself have never thought themselves bound to confess error, as our saints confess truth. Too well have we learnt to know those idolaters in

“ heart, who are Christians with their lips only.
“ I wish, however, to spare you the utterance
“ of a profane falsehood: it is not to me that
“ you are to open your conscience. I have no
“ other duty to fulfil than to stop you on the
“ brink of the precipice down which you were
“ about to fall, and to place you in the hands of
“ a prelate more worthy, more enlightened than
“ myself. He will take charge of your soul; I
“ have only to take care that you be conducted
“ in a decent and becoming manner to the con-
“ vent which is intended for your reception. I
“ regret that you should be the only female
“ among so many men: it was impossible to
“ arrange otherwise, but I will contrive that
“ this painful inconvenience may continue no
“ longer than is absolutely necessary. Follow
“ me; come and take some food to prepare
“ yourself for the fatigues of the journey.”

Felix and Julia were not at liberty to refuse this invitation. They accompanied their guards to one of the subterraneous halls, where a large fire had been kindled, and a frugal meal spread, consisting of milk, bread, dried fruits, and salt fish. “ You must now feel convinced,” said the priest to the captives, “ that all resistance
“ on your part would be useless. Will you
“ then frankly promise to make no attempt to

“escape? If so I will order your hands to be “liberated.” Felix and Julia both felt that now they had no choice left. They promised to make no resistance, nor any efforts for their escape until they should be out of the cavern; the priest, therefore, ordered their bonds to be loosed.

In spite of the resentment they felt on account of the culpable violence which deprived them of their liberty, Felix and Julia could not avoid observing by the demeanour of the superior, that with fervent zeal he mingled affectionate compassion, and that he preserved a conscientious feeling of duty even at the very time when he thought himself compelled by his vows of obedience to commit so outrageous an action. Both felt that this man who had taken from them their liberty, and was about to dispose of their persons, as if they were legitimately subject to him, was not, however, their enemy: both perceived they had nothing to fear from him beyond what he had already announced to them; and although they had just been made his prisoners in defiance of all law, they placed their confidence in him. They plainly saw they should be condemned to a certain period of captivity in some convent; but they were convinced that by firmly refusing to pronounce eternal

vows, that captivity must have an end. With the consciousness they had of the rank they held in society, and of the power of their families, they thought it impossible their calamity could be of long duration ; and at this time the violence to which they were obliged to submit, would serve better to rescue Julia from the pursuits of Clovis, than any of the expedients they had before dreamt of. They resumed, therefore, a certain degree of composure, and did not refuse to share the repast which had been prepared for them.

“ You affirm, father,” said Julia to the priest, “ that you feel no animosity against us, and I am willing to believe you. I do not regret the crown you wish to remove from my head, and, if the violence you have just committed, spare me the horror of giving my hand to the enemy of my country, I shall, perhaps, feel obliged to you for a deed, the justice of which I leave to the decision of your own conscience; but if it be true that you are not excited by hatred, you will not employ against us any rigour beyond what is necessary for the attainment of your object. Whither do you intend to take us ?”

“ To Tours.”

“ Into whose hands shall we be delivered ?”

“ You will be placed with the nuns ; Felix
“ with the monks of St. Martin.”

“ Will there be no means,” said Felix, “ of
“ our seeing each other ?”

“ Certainly not.”

“ May we at least,” said Julia, “ tranquillize
“ our families on the subject of our disappear-
“ ance ?”

“ That is impossible ; thereby they would be
“ enabled to discover you.”

“ I shudder,” said Felix, “ at the anguish my
“ mother feels ; even now perhaps is she in vain
“ seeking for us on all sides. If you conceal
“ from her what you do with us, shew me at
“ least some means of calming her agitation.”

“ I see none.”

“ A note directed to her might be sent or
left——”

“ My orders are positive, to permit you to
“ have communication with no one. The fate
“ of the church of Gaul depends, perhaps, on
“ the retreat of the daughter of Severus not
“ being suspected. Were we to do what you
“ request, your mother would discover that you
“ are not in the power of robbers, and probably
“ might then guess that you are in ours.”

“ Before that God whom you serve,” ex-
claimed Felix rising, “ I make you responsible

“ for the life of my kindred : far better would it
“ be to plunge a dagger into their hearts, than to
“ make them slowly perish by grief and anxiety.”

The priest seemed affected. He carried his hand to his brow as if to wipe away a tear. Then, resuming, with a violent effort, all the severity of his countenance and voice, he replied, “ I fulfil my duty ; for the consequences
“ I need not care.”

Felix sunk on his seat, dismayed by this mixture of compassion and inflexibility, which left him no hope. “ My poor unfortunate mother
“ will fancy we have perished in these caves !” said he with the voice of despair.

“ No,” said the priest, “ when we depart we
“ will leave these caverns open, so that she may
“ be convinced you are no longer here. Besides,” added he, with a voice of deep affection, which revived the hopes of Felix, “ what I
“ have not the right to do, will surely be done
“ by my superior. He cannot wish to be answerable before God for the life of your
“ mother.”

After having thus spoken, the priest arose from the table, walked several times across the subterraneous hall, agitated by the most violent feelings ; he then threw himself on his knees, apparently seeking to fortify himself by prayer

for the execution of what he considered to be his duty.

Felix turned towards Julia, and commenced, in a low voice, a conversation which neither the priest, nor any of his assistants, sought to hear or interrupt. Both saw with grief the moment approach when they should be again separated. But at the same time both observed, that the present trial could be only temporary, whereas it perhaps rescued them from endless misery. They consequently endeavoured to strengthen themselves against the dangers to which, when separated, they would probably be exposed, and above all against the false reports respecting each other they might hear from those who surrounded them. They mutually promised never to believe, on the faith of any one, that either of them had renounced the hope of a union by entering into an eternal covenant. They solemnly declared they would never pronounce the vows in the convents where they were going to be immured; that they would never cease to love each other, and never would abandon the hope of being ultimately united. They had been informed that they must give up all hopes of an interview as long as they should be in the power of the monks; but it was not certain they would be denied the privilege

of corresponding, or at least of exchanging symbolical presents or messages to which they already endeavoured to prefix a meaning.

With them time fled more rapidly than with the unhappy Sylvia, and they had been several hours in the cavern when one of their guards, who had departed some time before, came back to the priest, and whispered some words in his ear. "The time is expired," said he to his captives, "let us depart. Felix, it is better both for you and for me that you should revoke the promise you have given, and that you should yield to force alone. You may, perhaps, imagine as you quit the cave that a moment of daring skill might suffice to recover your liberty. I do not wish to expose you to a temptation which would only aggravate your sufferings.—Let the captives be again bound." When they were properly secured, he said to his attendants, "cover their mouths with a bandage, and clothe them in the habit of our order; draw the cowl over their eyes, and let us begone."

When the habit was presented to Julia, her whole frame shook; it was similar to the one offered to her in the vision which had made so deep an impression on her mind. That prophetic dream now seemed to be accom-

plished; she had taken the garb of penance; she was following men who wore the emblems of St. Martin of Tours; she was quitting the vain pomps of the world. But could she determine whether by so doing she completely fulfilled the order she had received; whether the foolish hopes she was commanded to renounce were not those she had formed of a union with Felix? The confidence that had revived in her heart; the satisfaction with which she had seen an obstacle opposed to the will of her father, more powerful than any she herself could have raised, vanished in an instant. The tears began to trickle down her cheeks, but her mouth was closed with a linen bandage; the cowl was lowered over her face, she could neither be seen nor heard; and though she stood by the side of Felix, all communication between them had ceased. Two men now took her by the arms, and led her onwards in silence; two others conducted Felix in the same manner. A man, bearing a torch, the glimmer of which was discerned through their cowls, preceded them. After walking some time through the cavern, they heard a noise similar to that of a gate turning on its hinges; they passed onwards, and perceived that a fresh gale fanned their garments. They were out of the cavern. Both

simultaneously endeavoured to shriek; but although their voices were not entirely stifled by the bandages which covered their mouths, the guides paid no attention. They raised them by their arms, and placed them in a boat by the side of each other. Soon after the rolling of the current, and the strokes of the oars, convinced them they were descending the Loire.

CHAP. III.

THE DEMONIAC.

“ As soon as the authors of these crimes are seized by an unclean spirit they tear and bite each other with their teeth, crying with a loud voice : O HOLY MARTYR, WHEREFORE DOST THOU TORMENT ME THUS ? ”

Greg. Tw. Hist. Lib. iii. cap. 12. p. 192.

THEIR voyage lasted several hours ; the wind was fresh and the air damp ; the two lovers were still bound, they could neither see each other, nor indeed any object around them. The bandage which had been placed on their mouths to hinder them from calling for assistance, when they passed a village, or met a boat, had not been taken away ; nevertheless the motion of their heads had somewhat loosened them, but as they took advantage of this circumstance only to converse together, the guards had not thought it necessary to draw them tighter.

Sitting on the same bench, and leaning against

each other, while the rolling of the boat made them often lose their balance, the two lovers commenced a conversation, in a low voice, which was not interrupted; but as they had reason to believe they were observed and perhaps overheard, they spoke with the greatest reserve. They were not mistaken: the priest who conducted them was seated behind them; he listened and was astonished to find by their discourse, that she who had been represented to him as the intended bride of Clovis was attached to another man, and that she dreaded her union with the king of the Franks more than the captivity to which he was taking her; he found that she who had been described to him as having no other thought, no other desire than the re-establishment of idolatrous worship, and the persecution of the church, spoke of the priesthood with respect, and placed herself confidently under the protection of that very religion in the name of which she had been deprived of her liberty.

In their captivity the two lovers still felt some delight as long as they could lean against and hear each other; for the most innocent contact often excites a reciprocal sensation. Seated on a narrow bench, cold, fatigue and the pitching of the boat, as they could not support themselves with their hands, obliged them to press together

the more closely; thus, without offending the most scrupulous prudery, each felt the palpitation of the other's heart, which spoke a language more expressive than could have been uttered by the tongue. Breathing together, supporting each other, companions in adversity; these circumstances had formed for them that indissoluble bond to which they directed all their hopes. Never had they loved more, never had affection made a more rapid progress in their hearts.

They arrived at Tours as the day began to break. No motion was yet heard in the streets. The cumbrous gates of St. Martin were opened to them: they entered, and not till then was the cowl removed which covered their faces: their hands were unbound, and the bandage was taken from their mouths.

Felix and Julia were now standing in a quadrangle, surrounded on three sides by large buildings, but on the fourth bounded by a wall which arose to the height of the most lofty edifices. In front of this wall was seen one side of the cathedral, easily distinguished by its peculiar architecture; on the two other sides stood two square houses opposite each other, the narrow windows, iron gratings, and massy walls of which, proved they were convents. Of these,

one was the nunnery of St. Mary of the Casket ; the same which Ingletrude, daughter of Clothaire the first, rebuilt and richly endowed a century afterwards ; the other containing monks differing in order, habit and discipline, who relieved each other in chanting psalms incessantly in the cathedral, was the famous monastery of St. Martin of Tours, the most celebrated, the most rigid in its rules, and the most wealthy of Gaul.

When Felix and Julia recovered the use of their sight, they measured with their eyes those lofty walls, black with humidity ; those narrow windows, by which so small a portion of light was admitted into the cells of the unfortunate recluses, those gratings, those bars, which seemed like precautions taken against the repentance of such as had voluntarily condemned themselves to eternal imprisonment, and against their efforts to escape : the solemn, the death-like stillness, in a place where so many living beings were immured ; the turf, the moss which covered the pavement of the quadrangle, shewing how rarely it was trodden ; all these objects made a deep and sorrowful impression on the hearts of Julia and Felix. They turned their eyes towards each other, seeking a confirmation of the promises of constancy and love they had pledged

the preceding night; but Felix saw the tears glisten in the eyes of Julia, and he felt that strength of resolution might remain powerless before the force of monastic despotism to which they were now both subjected.

The priest who conducted them hither, after allowing them some time to recover themselves, said: "my children, I have fulfilled, towards
" you, a severe duty; perhaps I have caused
" you to suffer much, although labouring for
" your eternal happiness, not less than for the
" welfare of the church: I repent not. Belongs
" it to me, weak reptile that I am, to weigh the
" commands of the Most High? Belongs it to
" my arrogant reason to scrutinize what divine
" wisdom hath determined, or what its organs
" on this earth have pronounced? But yet the
" old man is not entirely subdued in me. I can
" feel regret, though I have no remorse: I should
" have been better pleased had the holy arch-
" bishop spared me the painful task I have just
" completed. As I have injured you by my obe-
" dience, I should wish, if possible, to benefit
" you by my affection. If any opportunity
" present itself for me to serve you, remember
" Father Andrew. If you preserve any resent-
" ment against me, offer it as a sacrifice to the
" Almighty, not for the love of me, but for the

“ love of yourselves. Be assured I have not
“ forgotten your intreaty to ease Sylvia Numan-
“ tia of her present anguish. If there be any
“ means of so doing, without betraying the
“ secret confided to my trust, I will undertake
“ it.”

The two captives looked on each other ; this was, perhaps, the last time their eyes would ever meet : their hearts were too full of tenderness and grief to leave any room for resentment and hatred : both assured Father Andrew they forgave him, and would, in case of need, profit by his good intentions towards them.

Father Andrew hesitated ; something still pressed on his mind, yet he seemed unwilling to express it. At length he said : “ you are going
“ to live among holy men and holy virgins ; you
“ will see in them, doubtless, nothing but exam-
“ ples of virtue, sanctitude, and obedience ; imi-
“ tate those examples, and above all imitate
“ their silence. The time will come, perhaps,
“ when by a general confession, you shall vo-
“ luntarily open your hearts to some holy man,
“ but until then be silent, since all you utter
“ will be reported to the archbishop ; let him
“ hear what you have to say, from your own
“ mouth rather than from the report of your
“ confidants ; for in a convent, as in the world,

“it is more safe to confess than to confide.” Father Andrew having given this last warning to his captives, knocked at the doors of the two monasteries.—“A male and a female penitent,” said he to the porter, “by the order of the most “holy bishop Volusianus.” The two lovers pressed each other’s hand, pronouncing a farewell; they entered the convents, and heard the heavy gates closed and barred behind them.

The porter who had introduced Felix into the monastery, conducted him, without speaking, to a long hall, which appeared to be the refectory of the monks, and there left him alone. Felix seeing him retire, recalled him, wishing to ask a few questions; but the porter informed him he must await the orders of the abbot, and did not vouchsafe to give any further answer.

After he had remained in this place two hours, a procession of about twenty monks entered, walking two by two: their eyes were cast on the ground, their hands folded on their breasts, and they were repeating a prayer. Felix approached several of them successively, asking what they expected him to do. Each repelled him, with a gesture of impatience, expressing that he did not wish to be interrupted. When the prayer was ended, the monk who walked at the head of the others, and who was called the

dean, deigned to notice his presence. "Are you Felix Florentius?" said he.

"The same."

"Sit down."

At the same moment all the monks took their places at the table, saving one, who, ascending a sort of pulpit, began the reading of the gospel. The pantry now opened, and numerous lay brethren entered with solemn gravity, bearing dishes in their hands. Soon the table was covered with well-dressed viands. But each monk, and Felix himself, had a separate commons, a separate piece of bread and a portion of wine. It appeared that it was intended no monk should ever find it necessary to ask of his neighbour any of those slight services which are mutually rendered at table, and that he never should risk the loss of his proper share by the gluttony of his brethren. The commons were so abundant that they appeared more than sufficient to satisfy the most voracious appetite; but Felix saw them rapidly disappear from the plates of the monks, although he had scarcely touched his own.

The reading continued, to which the monks, busied with their repast, paid little attention; their eyes were fixed on their plates alone; no look of affection, of intelligence, of civility,

was exchanged between them. Condemned to pass their lives together, they were as much strangers to each other as if they had never met. Their minds were as insensible to curiosity as to friendship. When their leader, or dean, mentioned the name of Felix Florentius aloud, all eyes were mechanically directed towards him, but it was for an instant only, for afterwards the stranger remained totally unnoticed. His appearance in the middle of the chapter had not drawn forth a single question, he had not even seen in the whole assembly any two monks exchange whispers while looking on him.

Felix imagined that by alluding to his strange adventures he might awaken their torpid curiosity, and commence a conversation with some of his hosts: "When last night I was carried off," said he, "from the caverns of Hesodunum,"——

"Hush!" replied the monk, pointing to the reader, to whom until then he had apparently paid no attention.

Felix thought he had at least left an impression which would act upon the curiosity of his neighbour, and that when the reading should be finished, the monk would himself recommence the conversation. But, after the repast, the reader stopt to eat in his turn, and the monk,

folding his hands upon his breast, and twirling his thumbs around each other, remained in silence, without so much as turning his head towards Felix. This latter, after observing him for some time, looked at the others, and found them all in the same attitude of repose. He now impatiently raised his voice; and addressing the dean himself, he demanded what they intended to do with him.

“Hush!” replied the dean, pointing to the monks, “disturb not their holy meditations.” Felix was silent: these meditations continued half an hour, and Felix seeing the closed eyelids, and hearing the loud breathing of his neighbours, and of the dean himself, thought he might with propriety conclude, that what in a convent was termed holy meditation, would, in the language of the world, be called sound sleep.

At length a bell tolled: the monks shook themselves, and with a drowsy voice began to chant an anthem as they arose from their seats, and they quitted the refectory in the same order they had entered it. The dean then turning towards Felix, said, “follow us to the choir.” Felix followed. As he advanced he found himself placed between two files of monks, who were chanting with a loud voice. They advanced through several long interior passages,

serving as a communication between the convent and the cathedral, which they entered at the back of the high altar. Another choir of monks had been singing in the church for the last three hours. These did not wear the same habit, and were not subject to the same rules, though they lived in the same convent. They quitted the benches on which they were seated to make room for those newly arrived, and, without interrupting their psalmody, marched out in procession.

Felix now stood in the same church where a few weeks before he had seen Volusianus, and when he had an interview with that prelate in which he seemed to enjoy his entire confidence. He was then charged by the bishop with an honourable mission in the name of all the cities of Gaul: that negotiation he had ended successfully; hardly had he returned; he had not even been able to give an account of his success to those by whom he had been commissioned; and now he stood as a captive, a penitent, or a monk—in short, he knew not what—in the chancel of the cathedral, which he had every reason to believe he should not be allowed to quit.

On the very spot where he had entered, he felt that, although in the presence of the public, he was a prisoner. He was on the second bench,

leaning against the wall. To the right and left, and on the bench before him, were seated several monks, who surrounded him, nearly concealing his person from the sight of the faithful. These latter, moreover, being separated from the choir by a lofty balustrade, stood at some distance. Felix, however, meditated the design of demanding justice of Volusianus with a loud voice, should that prelate approach; and if a fit opportunity should not present itself, he had almost resolved to choose the moment when the church should be full, in order to make known his name, to complain of unmerited violence, and to demand his liberty.

He saw that this would be a desperate attempt, which he ought not hastily to hazard, when he heard the dean say to the bedels, the ushers, and the monks: "the most holy apostolic orders that if the penitent disturb our sacred duties, or make any effort to escape, he shall be instantly shut up in the dungeon beneath the belfry." To this order they replied by a bow of obedience.

In spite of this threat, which they took care to sound distinctly in his ears, Felix thought that if he could defend himself for a few minutes against the monks, the tumult excited in the church would procure him some defenders: but

then his retreat, and that of Julia, would be known, and even the power of Volusianus would, probably, not be sufficient to retain the latter, if Clovis should demand her. He therefore judged it more prudent to submit himself patiently to a captivity which he supposed could not be of long continuance.

It must also be observed that no opportunity presented itself for him to make an attempt to regain his liberty. Neither Volusianus, nor any of the superior clergy, whom Felix had, in his last journey, seen in his suite, entered the cathedral. At this hour also, the inhabitants of Tours, having commenced their daily labours, were seldom seen in the church. He perceived none but a few old women in prayer at the feet of the different altars; or, in the distance, pilgrims, crawling on their knees around the shrine of St. Martin, and, from time to time, the ferocious countenances of assassins and ruffians, who had taken refuge in the temple. These eyed with greediness and envy the riches displayed before their eyes; but they durst not approach them, convinced that sacrilege was ever punished by instant death.

The chant of the monks had continued without cessation, and its soporific monotony added to the inclination Felix before felt for slumber;

for, since his departure from Soissons, he had taken no repose, as he arrived on horseback to the banks of the Loire; neither had he felt much desire for sleeping while in the presence of Julia, among the ruins of Hesodunum, or in the boat, where he had been led captive with her. In despite of his disquietude, of his strange reminiscences, and the no less strange fears which busied his imagination, his heavy eyes had closed more than once since his entrance into the church: but the bedels were constantly on the watch, and whenever they saw him dozing, they pushed him with their long wands, and this painful struggle continued as long as the chant of the monks—about three hours. It seemed as if he had neither slept nor waked, but had been in a long dream.

At length he heard afar off the approach of another choir of monks, who advanced chanting in the same order, to replace those among whom Felix was sitting. He remarked between the two files, a penitent clothed with a habit similar to that which had been thrown over his shoulders at Hesodunum, and which he had not yet been allowed to lay aside. This penitent was not a monk; he shared not in the chant, but seemed to approach with reluctance and resist the monks who were dragging him forward.

Suddenly he raised his voice: "Help, citizens of Tours," he exclaimed, "rescue me from atrocious violence; I am——" His voice was instantly drowned in that of the monks, who began to chant, or rather to bawl out their psalms, with the whole strength of their lungs, at the same time pommeling the body of the wretched struggler. Loud music, forming a part of the orchestra, stifled the shrieks of the miserable penitent, while some devout old ladies, who were on their knees in the cathedral, cried out, **A DEMONIAK! A DEMONIAK!** casting their eyes on the ground, and praying with increased fervour and enthusiasm.

Although the voice of the pretended demoniac was totally unknown to Felix, he started up, wishing to render him some assistance, but the monks, on both sides, seized him by his arms and compelled him to resume his seat. The demoniac also submitted to superior strength; the new choir took the place of the former, which now quitted the church singing in the same manner as they had entered it; Felix, walking between them, found himself once more in the passages of the convent.

Here the procession separated, and each monk entered a separate cell, the dean, pointing to an open door, said to Felix: "That

"is your cell; be ready at noon for the devotional exercises."

"What exercises?" said Felix, with astonishment; "what else do you require of me?"

"That you sing in the choir, or at least be present at the chant, every morning from eight to eleven; in the evening from four to seven, and, in the night, only from twelve to two; it is moreover expected you should join in our prayers at noon, and at eight in the evening."

"What can be your object in thus tormenting me? I am no monk, neither do I ever intend to become one. By what right—"

"Such is the rule of the house; all the unfortunate persons in your state are equally subject to it."

"In my state, said you? What is my state?"

"Perhaps were I to tell you what it is, I should cause the unclean spirit to return. Commend your soul to God and submit."

"No, speak, I ask again, what is my state?"

"Since you must know it—you are a DEMONIAC."

"Strange infatuation; I! I Felix Florentius, a DEMONIAC! I, whom your own bishop commissioned to represent him at the court of Clovis,—I, who am just returned from an

“embassy, where I have guaranteed the rights
“of your own church!”

“Yes—you—Felix Florentius, who last night
“struck a priest with your sacrilegious hands,
“and by that deed of abomination, abandoned
“yourself to the powers of hell.—You, Felix
“Florentius, who descended into the caverns of
“Hesodunum, to worship the unclean spirits;
“you, who there met an agent of Beelzebub,
“presented to your eyes under the semblance
“of a woman; you, who were so completely
“enslaved by her seductions, as to sacrifice
“your immortal soul to her; you, who were then
“instantly seized by infernal spirits, plunged
“into the darkness of night, and after hav-
“ing been the dupe of I know not how many
“illusions, were whirled rapidly towards the
“gulfs of hell, when a holy man of this con-
“vent, praying before the shrine of the ever
“blessed St. Martin, discovered your danger
“and miraculously delivered you by his prayers,
“a reward, perhaps, for the service you had just
“rendered to our church. The devils were
“this morning compelled to lay you down at
“the gates of our convent. You see, Felix Flo-
“rentius, that I am well acquainted with your
“history.”

“What, is this the manner in which they
“dare relate so scandalous a deed?”

“ *Dare*, indeed ! Know that in our eyes your
“ past greatness is like the grass that withereth,
“ like the dust that the wind scattereth. Here
“ you are no more than a man ; and so long as
“ the unclean spirit hath dominion over you, you
“ are less than a man. Here we *dare* to speak
“ the truth ; and in case of need we shall *dare*
“ to place you under discipline. More than
“ once have we used force to compel the demo-
“ niacs to assist at divine service ; but at the
“ end of a few weeks the unclean spirit always
“ yields to our efforts, the paroxysms become
“ less frequent ; the intervals of repose, such as
“ that in which you now are, become gradually
“ longer, and he whom at first we were obliged
“ to bind for the purpose of dragging to the
“ church, goes thither in the end with good will
“ and even with pleasure.

“ Can it be, that a sensible man does not even
“ doubt such marvellous assumptions ! You nar-
“ rate them without evincing the slightest asto-
“ nishment.”

“ A servant of St. Martin soon ceases to be
“ astonished : in this house all is a prodigy.
“ Here we are more accustomed to the order of
“ miracles than to the order of nature. When
“ we every day see the sick restored to health,
“ the dead raised from the grave ; when we see

“ the sacrilegious struck at the foot of the altar,
“ and instantly die, as if crushed by the thunder;
“ or, foaming, welter in their blood, for having
“ stretched out a profane hand against the sacred
“ treasures of St. Martin ;—when, I say,
“ we have seen all this, we cannot feel much
“ astonishment at adventures so common as
“ yours.”

“ These common adventures, then, are they
“ known to the whole convent ?”

“ Certainly : and yet you may have perceived
“ they excited neither astonishment nor curiosity
“ among our brethren.”

Felix, during this conversation had time to calm the irritation of his mind ; he was convinced that all resistance would be useless, that his protestations would not be heard, and that any impatience he might evince, would be regarded as a new proof of his being possessed by a devil. He also deemed it prudent to study the plans of those into whose hands he had fallen, and to give them sufficient time to enable him to discover their intentions, in order that he might place himself on the defensive. The dean, although he exercised an absolute authority over him, was not, he thought, a principal actor in this business : he fancied he was not admitted into the confidence of Volusianus, nay,

that he himself believed all the fables he had just related. Felix did not observe in his countenance the marks of any malevolent passion; he thought, that with a little skill and attention he might gain his goodwill. He therefore put an end to the conversation, and entered the cell prepared for him; as he threw himself on the bed to take some repose, he heard his door closed and double locked.

CHAP. IV.

A PROTECTOR.

“If thou givest me victory over these enemies,” exclaimed Clovis; “if I receive any proof of the power which the people attribute to thee, I will believe in thee, and will be baptized in thy name. For I have already invoked my own gods, and I find they have deserted me.”—*Vita S. Rem. p. 375.*

SOME days had already elapsed since the disappearance of Felix and Julia; this time Severus passed, partly at Noviliacum, partly at Chartres, anxiously busied in seeking to gain some tidings of his daughter. He sent messengers on all sides; by the agency of Lamia, the priestess of Pan, he offered to the *bagaudæ*, who might be privy to the deed, pardon, asylum, and reward, in return for a frank confession: he wrote to all his friends: he demanded the assistance of all whose credit or power was considerable; he obtained from them promises but no new intelligence.

Sylvia meanwhile was no less active in her researches. The violent attack of fever, which at first seemed to threaten her with a long illness, had not returned. "I have no time to be ill," said she, "so long as the liberty, nay, perhaps, the life of my only son, depends on my efforts." Thus, in spite of the shock she had just received, the strength of her resolution triumphed over the despondency of her spirits.

Twice she fancied she held a clue which might guide her to truth. Some wandering mendicants from Limoges, declared they had met on that road a party of Visigoth soldiers, conducting two prisoners of importance to Toulouse. They added that one of the prisoners was accused of having entered into a treaty with the Franks, prejudicial to the interests of Alaric the Second. This report did not appear very improbable, and, by giving a new direction to the uneasiness of Sylvia, it served to augment her alarm. She requested to see the beggars, to whom she put many questions, accompanied by presents; she offered them a large reward if they would assist her in recovering her son; but their answers now became more confused, and she was soon convinced their whole tale was a fabrication: she could not so easily determine, whether these vagabonds had themselves speculated upon her

anxiety, or whether a more powerful and skilful hand had directed them.

Just as she had discovered the falsehood of this report, news was brought her of a body of Frank soldiers having advanced to Chartres, who, without making known their motive, had suddenly retired, two days after the disappearance of Felix and Julia. The priest Martin, to whom this information was first given, added that Clovis evidently wished to judge, by his own observation, of the wife offered to him, and had therefore caused her to be carried off, seeing that her father so long delayed bringing her to Soissons. He likewise observed that this conjecture was rendered still more probable by the appearance of a troop of *bagaudæ* in the woods of Chartres; these robbers, who were doubtless guilty of the deed, had been seen the day following that on which it was executed, and likewise on the day before the departure of the Frank troops.

Sylvia immediately transmitted this information to Julius Severus, who was then at Chartres, and therefore better enabled to ascertain its truth. Martin did not await the return of the senator to Noviliacum; since the disappearance of Felix he had become cross and sullen; he declared more openly his detestation

of the count of Chartres and his daughter, whose fatal friendship had, he said, been the cause of his pupil's ruin. He accused every one, he blamed every one, and with an acrimony greater even than he was wont to adopt. At length he departed for Tours, alleging a pressing order he had received from his bishop, Volusianus.

Julius Severus, when returned to Noviliacum, informed Sylvia that the Franks who had been seen at Chartres, formed part of his own suite: that the runaway peasants who had been observed in the woods, came from the north, not from the south. "These false reports," said he, "by which some persons seek to deceive us, take all doubt from my mind. Our children are not in the power of common robbers, they would not be so dexterous. They are not in the hands of a barbarian prince, nor of any enemy sufficiently potent to dare our resentment, for he would not take so much trouble. It can be only some one of the heads of the church, who thus joins cunning to force; and if my conjectures have any foundation, if I can trust the information I have gathered, we must seek for them at Tours, close to Volusianus. It would perhaps be better they were in the haunts of robbers. They are not now, I hope, maltreated, but I tremble for them as soon as

“ our efforts shall excite the alarm of the prelate.
“ No crime will Volusianus scruple to commit
“ in order to conceal them from our researches.
“ Let us beware then, not to knock at the gates
“ of the convent in which they are immured
“ until we are certain they must be opened to us.”

Sylvia would have been pleased could she have known, in a more precise manner, the nature of the information to which Severus alluded; but as it was connected with his communications with Lamia, and as he himself could not clearly distinguish what in her revelations he ought to attribute to the prophetic powers of the Pythoness, or to the secret information of the confidant of the *bagaudæ*, he did not tell Sylvia all he knew, and therefore could not succeed in bringing her to consider the captivity of their children in the same point of view. During their conversation a messenger delivered to Sylvia an unsealed note, which she immediately knew to be written by her son: it contained the following words only:—

“ I am in health and in safety, but a captive
“ and separated from Julia. My greatest grief
“ proceeds from the anguish into which you must
“ have been plunged by our disappearance.
“ Those in whose power I now am, allow me
“ to calm your anxiety, under condition that I

“ give you no information respecting the place
“ to which we have been taken, and also that I
“ do request you will make no search for us, as
“ all your efforts would serve only to aggravate
“ our confinement.”

The bearer of this note declared he had received it from a priest he did not know, who had come to seek him in a neighbouring village. No other information could be elicited from this man. The note, however, and the profession of him who had transmitted it, confirmed the suspicions of Julius Severus. It restored some calm to the mind of Sylvia, and induced her to acquiesce in the measures Severus was about to adopt.

The archbishop, or, as he was more commonly called, the metropolitan bishop of Tours, acknowledged no superior on the earth. There was no government to which the aggrieved might appeal against his arbitrary measures. The Visigoths of Toulouse had certainly, during a short space of time, extended their jurisdiction to the banks of the Loire; but during the six years that had passed since the death of Euric, no Visigoths had ever been seen to advance into this part of Aquitaine: the rights to which Alaric might have pretended were now entirely forgotten; and even had he preserved them, they

would probably never have been exercised, for the Arian was very cautious in meddling with the affairs of the church, or resisting popular superstition.

Those who invoked the assistance of a council, or of the bishop of Rome, were obliged to resign themselves to the certainty of awaiting for years that justice which in the end was probably refused: to obtain justice by individual strength was impossible. The Romans who inhabited the provinces, having no soldiers to defend even their own property, were not inclined to take up arms in a private quarrel, least of all against the church. To penetrate into a convent by some stratagem or by surprise, in order to rescue the victims of sacerdotal power, was so difficult an enterprise, that scarcely was there an example of its being accompanied with success. Severus, however, meditated the attempt, should all other means fail.

But before recurring to these desperate measures, Severus resolved to apply to Clovis, in order to obtain by his means the liberty of Felix and his daughter. He knew very well that it was to throw an obstacle in the way of the marriage of Julia with the king of the Franks, that his daughter had been carried off; but he was aware also that the prelate, who founded all

his hopes of the triumph of orthodoxy upon the conversion of Clovis, would, above all, dread offending him whose protection was of so much importance. Severus was certain Volusianus would shew more deference to the king of the Franks than to any other person.

Severus resolved, therefore, to depart for Soissons; to lay before Clovis an account of the violence of which his daughter was the victim; to point out to him that this attempt of the priesthood was directed against his own royal dignity. He hoped that when he had excited the resentment of the king, he might persuade him to demand peremptorily, that the convents of Tours should be examined by royal agents, in order to ascertain whether Julia and Felix were not detained in them, and in case they were to restore them to liberty.

On his arrival at Soissons, Severus perceived that during his short absence his credit had sensibly diminished. He had quitted head quarters at one of those critical moments among courtiers, when he who wishes to secure his interest finds it necessary vigilantly to watch the sovereign, vacillating between different factions. Never had the influence of Severus over the king of the Franks been greater than in the few weeks immediately preceding his departure;

for he was then managing for him a most important negotiation, that which, uniting the Franks with the Armoricans, had made one single people of the two nations, a people hereafter destined to subjugate the whole of Gaul. But as soon as the treaty was signed, Clovis felt against Severus that jealousy so natural among princes towards those who have contributed to their elevation. His departure from Soissons had freed him from a constraint that was become rather irksome. The enemies of the count of Chartres surrounding the king, profited by the absence of the senator to convince Clovis how trifling was the number of pagans still inhabiting Gaul; how little their influence over public affairs could be dreaded, when once peasants and slaves ceased to be of importance; and Clovis joyfully concluded that he might oppress, without fear, those whom he had until now been obliged to respect.

On the other side, the negotiation which the archbishop of Vienne had undertaken, in order to bring about a union between the king of the Franks and Clotilda, the niece of the king of the Burgundians, was advancing rapidly and prosperously. The Frank warriors had loudly proclaimed their disapprobation of the marriage of

a descendant from the illustrious blood of Mero-veus, with any of those Roman women whom they already regarded as their slaves; but they had applauded his union with the royal race of the Burgundians. The king Gondebaud, who had murdered the father of Clotilda; who had cast her mother into a river, with a stone tied to her neck; who had assassinated with the dagger her two brothers; this Gondebaud, forgetting his past violence, no longer thought of the resentment his niece must feel, but he fancied that by her means he might contract a more strict alliance with the king of the Franks: he received with joy the first advances, and shewed himself anxious to promote a marriage which hastened the downfall of his family and monarchy. Clovis, aware of this favourable disposition, had just despatched Aurelianus, his Latin secretary, to Gondebaud, in order formally to demand the hand of Clotilda, so that Julia Severa was now forgotten.

“How dare you stand before me,” said Clovis to the senator, “after wishing to deceive me
“with respect to your daughter? Did you not
“tell me that she was free? I now hear she
“could never have been mine, for she was al-
“ready betrothed to him who has taken her off.”

“He who deceives the king,” replied Se-

verus, "surely deserves condign punishment;
"but it is not I who deceive your excellency;
"it is my enemies who tell you that my daughter
"was not free, or that she has been carried
"off by Felix."

"It was not of Felix the archbishop of
"Rheims spoke: that venerable priest is not
"wont to lie. He says that your daughter disappeared
"in the entrails of the earth—is not
"that true?"

"She certainly disappeared in the caverns of
"Hesodunum."

"He says she had plighted her faith to a
"god.—Who is that god of the Christians
"unto whom they rear no altars, but whom
"they hate,—whom they fear, and hate as we
"do the dread Waldkyres?"

"It is the king of the demons, Lucifer, whom
"your excellency means," said a priest who was
"present; "but far from us be the abomination
"of giving to him the name of God."

"Well, that Lucifer whom they don't call a
"god, although he reigns, say they, over all hell
"and half the earth — Did not he carry off
"your daughter? Did she not plight her faith
"to him? Did he not come into those ruins of
"Hesodunum, you were speaking of, to summon
"her to keep her promise?"

“Let not your excellency,” replied Severus, “place so much confidence in the priests who are inimical to your religion. The work of darkness they speak of was committed by themselves.”

“Say rather wo to the king who respects not the priests of all religions. It is by them that our power is strengthened,” replied Clovis.

“By them our liberty is annihilated,” exclaimed the Frank Theodoric. “Say, Gaul, who is the priest that hath offended thy daughter? I will avenge thee.”

“And thou,” exclaimed the irritated Clovis, “who pretendest to support a quarrel in which thy sovereign will not engage—who art thou?”

“A Frank—an Antrushion,” (this was the name given by the Franks to their captains, or to the leaders of small parties of volunteer soldiers.) “Never did I or mine yet await the order of a king to raise or to lay down the battleaxe.”

“You have elected me,” said Clovis more calmly, “to lead you on to battle; why then now wish to march without me?”

“You may,” replied Theodoric, “turn your back on a friend who needs your assistance; I never abandon mine in necessity.”

“Theodoric is in the right,” instantly ex-

“ not fancy that I shall go and demand a wife
“ from the hands of her ravisher; that I shall
“ wage war against the god of the Christians;
“ that I shall offend his priests, because one
“ Roman woman has obeyed the powers, either
“ of heaven or of hell; or, haply, because she
“ has fallen into some abyss among the ruins.
“ From me thou must expect no assistance.
“ But the Franks are free: if Theodoric will
“ second thee, he will doubtless find *leuds*
“ enough to shoulder the battleaxe and follow
“ him: but let them bear in mind that if the god
“ of the Christians scatter them with his breath,
“ Clovis has warned them not to attack him.”

This consent wrested from Clovis, in spite of his reluctance, was far from satisfying Julius Severus; he saw that the king did not wish the Franks should enlist under any other banner than his own; he knew that although he was compelled to shew respect to his soldiers, and to yield, continually, to their caprices, yet that deep resentment rankled in his heart, and that he always found means, sooner or later, to punish with cruel severity the offence he had borne in silence. Had Severus wished only to recover a part of his property he would probably have been too much of a courtier to accept the offer of Theodoric; he would have submitted to a

considerable loss, and awaited from the king's favour, a compensation, which perhaps he would never have received; but his only daughter was a prisoner in the hands of his most deadly foes. All other means of restoring her to liberty were denied him. His adherents at Soissons had already warned him of the progress made in the negotiation of the marriage of the king with Clotilda; they also informed him of the credit which St. Remy, had gained, together with the whole ecclesiastical party. The reception he had met with from Clovis convinced him that he could expect nothing from his friendship, and that the services he had rendered him, far from exciting his gratitude, were in his eyes become a demerit. He, therefore, accepted the offers of Theodoric, and demanded a conference with him in order to settle the plan of the meditated expedition.

Julius Severus did not desire, any more than Clovis, to renew hostilities between the Franks and the Romans. He wished to arrive before Tours with a body of some strength, so that the prelate might experience a little fear, and not reject his first demand; but he also wished that the Franks might afterwards retire, without having an opportunity to unsheath their swords. Such was the weakness of the provinces of Gaul,

such the defenceless state of Tours, where his enemy commanded, that he thought a body of three hundred Frank warriors more than enough to hazard a march of sixty leagues beyond head quarters, and dictate laws to a large city.

He did not wish to be compelled to satisfy the avidity of a greater number of soldiers than was absolutely necessary; for he had resolved to conduct them across the land of the Carnuti, and over his own estates; and he was perfectly aware that these barbarian soldiers would be very unpleasant guests, even though they advanced as friends. He designed, with the aid of Sylvia Numantia, to lead them across the Loire at Noviliacum, and thus deceive the foresight of Volusianus, who probably thought himself safe while protected by so wide a river.

The generous assistance of Theodoric was not gratuitous; the Franks loved battle, but the booty of war pleased them as much as its dangers. Theodoric demanded that his soldiers should be kept and paid during the whole of this expedition, at the end of which Severus was to give them two besants of gold per man, amounting to about one pound sterling; captain and men reckoned still more on the present the monks of St. Martin would not fail to make to the warriors about to honour them with a visit,

All these preliminaries being settled, Theodoric invited his comrades to a grand feast in the palace of Count Julius Severus, at Soissons.

Roman elegance presided not at this festival; its only excellency consisted in the abundance, not in the variety or delicacy of the viands. Fifteen tables were spread in the different halls: on each was seen an ox, a boar, a deer, or some other wild or domestic animal, roasted whole, and prepared for the voracious guests. Severus, Theodoric, and thirteen Antrusthions, or Frank lords, the friends of Theodoric, presided at the separate tables; each was surrounded by about twenty brave warriors, called his *leuds*, or companions, to whom he did the honours of the repast. These *leuds* voluntarily associated with him *in whom they placed their trust*: for such was the signification of the title ANTRUSTHION, and whom they made it a point of honour to second both in peace and in war. The wine and the beer, or *cerevisia*, flowed abundantly on all the boards: several of the warriors had brought with them, instead of a goblet, the skull of some enemy, who had fallen under their sword, and which they had chased in silver as a monument of their victory. Minstrels and German bards celebrated the ancient exploits of the divers races who had united under the name of

Franks, and the palace of Severus rang with loud shouts of joy.

When their minds were somewhat heated, but ere the feast had become a mere carousal, Theodoric called the Antrusthions into the largest hall; each arrived, followed by all the *leuds* who sat at his table. "Noble Franks," said Theodoric, "our host, the senator Julius Severus, my friend, the friend of our nation, hath received a mortal injury from a priest of the god of the Christians: his only daughter, the support of his house, the comfort of his old age, hath been wrested from him by treachery; now a captive, she pines in one of those prisons they call cloisters. Shall we allow the friend of the Franks to be insulted by a priest? Let us do him justice; away—let us taste the wines of the banks of the Loire;—away, let us demand of the monks of Tours some share of their treasures. You who will follow us, raise your battleaxes."

A few of the *leuds* declared they would have nothing to do with the priests, and were resolved on not provoking the anger of the Christian god. Those sat down, and soon after withdrew; but the greater part replied to Theodoric with the shout "*Away to Tours, to Tours;*" at the same time they clashed their battleaxes in the air, and

thus plighted their faith to undertake the expedition. Their chieftains bade them prepare for march on the following morn. They counted those who had entered into the voluntary engagement, and found they amounted to two hundred and ninety-three; they then returned to the table, and their carousals continued the greater part of the night.

CHAP. V.

A PUBLIC CONFRONTATION.

“ All who dwelt in the vicinity, the monks, the men, the women, moved with great devotion, eagerly crowded to this spot, where several of them miraculously cured of divers diseases, exalted and celebrated his praises with joy, whilst the multitude sang and wept, at the same time, around the body of the holy martyr.”—*Vita Sancti Leodegarii, Episc. cap. xvii. p. 625.*

WITH Felix time passed in wearisome monotony. He was, as he had previously been instructed, compelled to attend in the choirs of the cathedral two hours in the night, three hours in the morning, and the same time in the evening: he was also obliged to spend, three times every day, a whole hour at his repast in the refectory, during which the gospel was read by one of the friars; then half an hour at what the monks called holy meditation; and lastly, he was forced to assist twice a day for an hour at the recital of the litanies or church service.

The interval of these various devout exercises was the only time allotted to him for a repose thus incessantly interrupted. The rule to which he was subjected began to produce on the mind of Felix the same effects as on the monks whose mode of life he was compelled to follow. Although his thoughts remained in torpid sleep, his attention was continually and forcibly awakened: although buried as it were in idleness, he was aroused to incessant action: although his heart and mind were wandering on other subjects, the same sound was ever dinning his ears: thus situated, his moral faculties were absorbed in listless stupor—a stupor which he felt daily growing upon him, but which it was impossible to shake off. His present quiet but irksome existence was to him a punishment far more insupportable than the most violent storms of social life; he even began to regret those moments of cruel anxiety when dangers on all sides surrounded himself and the objects of his tenderest regard; for in those moments he at least felt the spring of conscious life, whereas now he found it impossible to overcome the lethargy which had taken possession of his soul.

Yet however disagreeable his present situation, and that of his beloved Julia might be,

Felix could not believe they were exposed to any very serious danger. He was in the midst of a numerous society of men, consecrated to religion, who appeared sincere in their zeal and enthusiasm, and on whose countenances he observed no traces of malignancy. The monks seemed to him beings whose faculties were stupefied by the extreme monotony of their existence; and who possessed not a single idea beyond the regulations to which they were subjected; who, exhausted by eight hours' singing, and two of prayer, thought they piously filled up the remainder of their time by sleeping and eating; men who would employ, without hesitation, the strength of their arms in maintaining the discipline of their convent; but who, it is probable, would not be accessary to a perfidious or cruel action: who, in short, were become so very indifferent to every thing, except themselves, that Felix conceived it to be no less impossible to awaken their hatred, than it was, from his own experience, to excite their curiosity.

Felix had no occasion for the prudence which father Andrew had recommended, in repelling all approaches to confidence. No one sought his, no one had shewn that interest in his affairs of which his adviser had admonished him to be-

ware. He almost regretted they had made no attempt to read his thoughts ; for it would have given him less pain to be deceived by a false commiseration, than to be so completely abandoned. He wished for some of the illusions of life, rather than the absolute solitude of the grave. But all his efforts to form an attachment with any of the men with whom he associated nearly the whole of the day and a part of the night, were vain : all his attempts to excite some kind of interest, by relating his history, had been repulsed by a cold and stupid insensibility : all his questions could draw forth no more than a few insignificant monosyllables, by way of reply : all his entreaties to see either Volusianus, some one of the dignified ecclesiastics, or father Andrew, were rejected with the single word *impossible*.

Judge of his lively joy, when on the fifth or sixth day of his captivity, he found, on returning to his cell, on the bed where he was going to repose, the following note :—

“ My son, I have not ceased to think of the
“ danger which you believe your mother’s health,
“ nay, even her life, would be exposed to, if she
“ remained ignorant of your fate. I am bound
“ to obedience and secrecy by solemn vows, by
“ the duties of my profession, by all the canons

“ of the church. On the other hand your entreaty
“ to save your mother, appears to me both
“ pious and just. Thus compelled to choose be-
“ tween duties which appear opposed to each
“ other, I have implored God to enlighten my
“ understanding. At length I am come to a
“ resolution, and may it please the Almighty
“ that it be conformable to his inspirations, that
“ it may appease the remorse which I feel for
“ what I have already done. Write to your
“ mother, calm her fears on the score of your
“ health and safety; but tell her that for the
“ present all her efforts for your deliverance
“ would but turn to your destruction. Refrain,
“ above all, from indicating in the slightest de-
“ gree the place of your detention; let what
“ you write be short and without artifice; leave
“ it in the place where you find this, and it
“ shall be conveyed to your mother.”

Although this letter was without signature, Felix knew that it must be written by father Andrew; he observed that a new species of doubt had arisen in the mind of this honest ecclesiastic; he seemed to hesitate about the extent of obedience due from a priest to his bishop. Perhaps father Andrew, who knew the truth, was indignant at the false colours in which Volusianus represented his abduction. He rejoiced

at having an invisible friend in his captivity, on whom he could the more depend, as he became so by the suggestions of conscience. He felt no surprise that father Andrew had been able to enter his cell during the time he was constrained to pass in the chancel; he therefore wrote the letter which was afterwards transmitted to his mother. He added another note, designed for father Andrew, but without address, in which he entreated that venerable priest to favour him with some information respecting his own destiny and that of his beloved Julia; to enlighten him with his counsels upon the conduct he ought to pursue; and lastly, to procure him the consolation of an interview, and thus enable him to see a human being who would listen to him, who would understand him, who would feel for him: this second note remained unanswered.

The anxiety of Felix concerning Julia tormented him to a degree almost insupportable. Since he had been in the convent, even her name had not been pronounced in his hearing. Of all the expedients which the two lovers had devised for imparting to each other some tidings of their existence, not one had been found practicable. They reckoned upon being surrounded in their captivity by inferiors, slaves, persons

over whom money would have some influence : Felix on the contrary, saw only men, who, in sanctity at least, thought themselves his superiors ; who felt no regard for him, who had no interest in pleasing him, to whom he had not the smallest power to do either good or harm. What could ever induce men without passions to render him any service ? Above all, how could he request them to break a monastic rule, which they considered as the emanation of sovereign wisdom and virtue ?

The attempts which he might have made to communicate with Julia, without the assistance of his companions, admitted not the slightest hope of success. Although the two convents occupied opposite sides of the same court, no cell in either of the buildings had a window opening in that direction. The part adjoining the quadrangle was altogether appropriated to the large halls, the refectory, the kitchens, and the galleries, the windows of which were out of the reach of persons in the inside. The space Felix had the liberty of perambulating, within the walls of the cloister, was extremely limited. It is true he went three times a day in the procession of the monks to the chancel, with which the nunnery communicated by in-

terior passages; but that part of the church was separated from the rest by a high balustrade, and he was never permitted to go there alone. In every part of the convent he met with barred doors and grated windows; and if, during the hours of rest, he walked in the small portion of the galleries which he had access to, he saw nothing but the naked walls of the convent; he met not a single living creature; he heard no sound, save the distant and monotonous chant of processions, which every three hours went to and returned from the church.

Felix was not only desirous to have news from his family; he wished almost as ardently to know what was at that time passing in Gaul. He was also anxious to learn by what means the king of the Franks had been informed of their captivity: whether he still thought of marrying the daughter of Severus; whether the latter had prevailed on Clovis to effect their deliverance; if the senator had any suspicion of the dignity with which their ravishers were invested. It was equally important for him to know what progress had been made by the contending factions of the court of Soissons, and whether the rivals of Severus had succeeded in directing the views of Clovis to another point. However dis-

agreeable might be their captivity, he was sensible that it had sheltered them from an evil which their own strength could not possibly have enabled them to overcome—the marriage of Julia with Clovis; therefore he preferred remaining silent, and making no effort to recover his liberty, or disclose his retreat until he was assured that Clovis had made another choice. On the other hand he was aware that the very moment the danger had passed, it would be necessary to make vigorous efforts to obtain his liberation, for he had every reason to fear that Volusianus had the intention of prolonging their captivity even till they ceased to exist. All the policy of the prelate was bent upon gaining the favour and protection of Clovis: but if the king of the Franks should once know by what act of violence he had hindered the accomplishment of his designs, he would doubtless conceive against him an implacable resentment. The perpetual confinement, or the death of the two prisoners, could alone shelter him from the dangerous consequences of a discovery.

Notwithstanding the ardent desire of Felix to learn what was passing upon the Loire, the Seine, and the Oise, it was impossible to obtain any information from the monks. It was still less their reserve than their ignorance that

hindered them from satisfying his curiosity. Indifferent to all worldly concerns, neither comprehending, nor seeking to comprehend, political science, they had learnt no more than the names of some of the barbarian chiefs, who were burning the cities, and ravaging the fields of their native country; and when they had inscribed in the chronicle of their convent an account of their expeditions, which never exceeded two lines, they fancied they had entered there the history of the whole year. This was all they had learnt, or ever wished to learn, concerning public events. More than once Felix had heard them at table, in the chancel, on retiring to their cells, exchange a few words with each other; and having renounced all hopes of obtaining any confidential information, he had redoubled his attention to catch their broken dialogues, as they passed his ears, which might perhaps furnish him with some intelligence relative to that which it was so much his interest to know. But never did he hear the monks speak upon any other subject, than the manner in which their last meal had been cooked, or the orders which the superior had given for the government of the house. It was, therefore, with great astonishment, that one day, in the beginning of December, as he was in the chancel, he

remarked the extreme agitation of the faithful, spread over the other parts of the church, who all rushed towards the door, at the same time that he heard the sound of warlike music, which he instantly recognized as that of the Franks.

Sylvia Numantia, and Julius Severus, who were then entering Tours with the small army, commanded by Theodoric, had not remained entirely ignorant of the fate of Felix. On the same day that Severus had passed the Loire, opposite Noviliacum, Sylvia, who had facilitated his passage, and had feasted his soldiers, whom she considered as deliverers, received a letter from Volusianus, bearing no very recent date. Nevertheless, as there was no visible reason for its delay, Severus guessed that the prelate of Tours had not written to her, until, warned of the approach of the Franks, he despaired of being able to conceal Felix any longer from their search. The letter was couched in the following words:—

*“ The apostolical Volusianus to the matron Sylvia
“ Numantia, GREETING.”*

“ We sought to mitigate your sufferings by
“ the letter which, within these few days, we
“ addressed to you. The time is come, when,
“ contrary to our inclination, we find our-
“ selves under the necessity of rendering your

“ grief more acute. You were then weeping
“ for a son whom you had lost, but all your
“ fears were confined to this terrestrial life,
“ which saints may rejoice in losing. Learn
“ that his immortal soul is in still greater danger.
“ He is possessed of an unclean spirit, and
“ without the prayers of a holy recluse of our
“ convent, who has rescued him from the fangs
“ of the king of darkness, he would at this mo-
“ ment be plunged into the gulfs of hell. Orders
“ have been given to administer the only re-
“ medy, which is applicable to his soul. Your
“ son is now following the rules of our brethren,
“ who, in consideration of the services he has
“ rendered us, have deigned to receive him
“ into their convent. He assists at our holy
“ exercises, at our perpetual *psallentium*, that
“ singular glory of the church of Tours, also at
“ the litanies, and at the prayers. The unclean
“ spirit, dreading the company of so many de-
“ vout persons, seems now to leave him some
“ repose. He is calm, and it is but rarely he
“ is seen to fall into convulsions or fits of fury.
“ But when he speaks he utters nought, save
“ the illusions of his distempered brain. How
“ can we give credence to any of his words?
“ Are they not dictated by him who was ever
“ the father of lies? It appears that the wretched

“daughter of the apostate had seduced him
“by her impious wiles. Often he asks for her;
“he relates his pretended voyage with her;
“our brethren, however, return him no answer;
“not even do they listen to him; for the utter-
“ings of the spirit of darkness corrupt the ears
“of those who hear them. As for the wretched
“woman, whom he thinks he has seen, of her
“we have had no tidings. We suppose that she
“is already in that terrible place, where there is
“weeping and gnashing of teeth; where her fa-
“ther will speedily join her. Seek not for your
“son until the grace of the ever-blessed St.
“Martin has worked upon his mind, has
“driven out its fits of rage, its vain delusions,
“and its deceitful remembrances.”

Although Sylvia was in general disposed to place much confidence in a prelate of the church, and above all in Volusianus, she was struck with the spirit of hypocrisy which Severus pointed out in this letter, and she by no means renounced her ardent desire to see her son, and to rescue him from the convent. Julius Severus strove to confirm her in this disposition, and to increase her distrust of the pious frauds, which the priests might think proper to practise. For himself he had not read, without shuddering, what the bishop of Tours had hinted respecting

the fate of his daughter. He could not, however, believe that his enemies had been so atrocious as to put an end to her existence. Her captivity was sufficient for their purpose, and the most cruel of men must have hesitated, ere they committed so dreadful a crime, without a motive. He had no doubt that Julia was shut up in one of the dark dungeons which belonged to the church; that what Volusianus had said of her, was designed to terrify him, and deter him from prosecuting his inquiries. But it produced the contrary effect; he judged that the moment was now come, when every means of rescuing her from the hands of the priests should be had recourse to. Assured of meeting Felix Florentius at Tours, he hoped to obtain from him much information on the subject; and he calculated that the zeal of a lover, joined to that of a father, would easily triumph over the artifices of the arch-priest; for all thoughts of a marriage between his daughter and Clovis being abandoned, the alliance of Felix Florentius now appeared to him both honourable and advantageous.

Julius Severus engaged Sylvia Numantia to accompany the small army of the Franks to Tours, and there to demand the instant restoration of her son. The citizens of Tours made no resistance, the gates were thrown open to

Theodoric as soon as he presented himself before them. Volusianus, encircled by a train of priests, and preceded by relics, lighted tapers, and the smoke of incense, advanced to meet him. Although the Franks belonging to this expedition were all pagans, yet the sight of the venerable old men who advanced in solemn procession, their long beards, the pomp of their pontifical robes, their pacific demeanour, and the bold confidence with which they came to meet warriors, inspired them with involuntary respect. They lowered their bucklers and leant on their *angons*, or short javelins, and contemplated with astonishment, unmixed with anger, this procession, which presented nothing to oppose them but chants and the smoke of tapers. At the same time Julius Severus, Sylvia, and Theodoric, stepped from their ranks to confer with Volusianus.

However much offended Julius Severus was, and however violent the resentment which he cherished within his breast, he had too much the manners and habits of a courtier to suffer his hatred to appear when he requested the bishop of Tours to restore his daughter and his friend to instant liberty. Theodoric and Sylvia made the same demand. Volusianus addressed his answer principally to Theodoric; he declared his attachment to the nation of the

Franks, his respect for their king, his desire to establish, upon this, their first visit, such ties of hospitality between them and the inhabitants of Tours, as might last for ever, and to conform to every wish of theirs, which was compatible with his duties. At the same time he requested that the noble Franks, according to the laws of hospitality, would share the festivities of his table before they proceeded to treat of business; he then caused a copious repast to be served up in the vestibule of the convent, to which the Franks eagerly sat down, without waiting for the consent of their chief.

In the mean time the church bells summoned the inhabitants of Tours to assemble in the cathedral. Although the arrival of the Franks excited uneasiness among the people, yet their feelings of devotion were redoubled by this event: the assembly was rapidly formed, it was numerous, and composed of more women than men; it was enthusiastic, full of faith, of gratitude, and of confidence in its pastor. Priests, scattered over the different parts of the church, contributed, by their discourse and their example, to animate and direct a zeal already so fervent.

A monk ascended the pulpit, and taking for his text, these words of the first epistle of St.

John: "In this the children of God are manifested, and the children of the devil," he announced to the faithful, that a new miracle had just declared the power and benevolence of their patron St. Martin. This miracle was to spread a light, by so much the more resplendent, as the gentiles themselves would feel its effects; on the other hand he invited the faithful to give glory to God in the sight of the Franks, when his works should be manifested. He informed them in what manner Felix Florentius, seduced by the daughter of an idolater, had permitted scepticism to take root in his mind. "As soon as his faith was shaken," said the monk, "the wretched sinner began to feel himself under the empire of the devil, who carried him off, in broad day-light, in the presence of his mother, of his ancient preceptor, a man more than half an infidel, who perhaps, in his heart, still sighs for the worship of idols, in the presence, lastly, of a numerous troop of domestics, who were unable to protect him. Thus do we see the weakness of man, whatever may be his worldly greatness, when he abandons the sacred doctrines of the church. All might have seen the very rocks of Hesodunum move from their places, block up the passages, and inclose him, together with her who wished to

“ to lead him to destruction, in the ruins conse-
“ crated to the false gods. Already was he floun-
“ dering in the gulfs of hell, already was his soul
“ fast approaching the streams of sulphur and boil-
“ ing pitch, when a venerable recluse of our mo-
“ nastery, father Andrew, on his knees, before the
“ tomb of the blessed St. Martin, became acquaint-
“ ed with the works of the demon. By the power
“ of his prayers, he delivered the captive soul.
“ At the very moment he lay devoutly prostrate
“ before the shrine, his image appeared to the
“ unhappy Felix, and rescued him from our com-
“ mon enemy. Andrew, in holy diffidence ac-
“ knowledges not the miracle, he refuses the glory
“ we are desirous of giving him, and leaves it
“ entirely to God. Felix, in the mean time, was
“ laid at the gate of our convent, and since the
“ Franks are come to demand him, to them
“ shall he be restored; but first you, my bre-
“ thren, shall see him, you shall hear him. The
“ apostolical Volusianus, in order to give glory
“ to God, has commanded that the whole trans-
“ action be public. You shall hear how the
“ spirit of darkness, who now speaks through
“ the mouth of Felix, no longer able to employ
“ force, attempts to impose upon us by artifice;
“ you shall hear the demon himself seeking
“ to disguise the truth. You it behoves, my

“brethren, to command his silence; the voice of
“the people is the voice of God; let then the
“voice of the people prevail over the voice of
“the devil!”

The orator had scarcely finished, when Volusianus entered the church at the head of his clergy, by one of the side doors; Theodoric entered by the other at the head of his Franks, who drew up at the bottom of the cathedral. Julius Severus remained between the two parties. Volusianus had assigned to Sylvia a distinguished place among the women. Although the Franks had already seen the pomp of the churches of Soissons, Paris, and Rheims, they gazed with astonishment on the splendid display of wealth, the brilliant light of the tapers, the smoke of incense arising in clouds to the roof of the temple, and the numerous troops of priests, habited in the full magnificence of their pontifical robes.

Whilst the barbarians were beholding with an eye of astonishment, and perhaps of covetousness, these riches of the sanctuary, a man, who from his dress and arms, appeared to be a Frank, though neither Theodoric nor his companions knew him, started from the ranks, and boldly advancing to the nearest altar, seized a massy silver candlestick. Instantly

the soldier dropped it, with a terrific scream, and falling, rolled to the bottom of the altar steps, where he remained in the most terrible convulsions, now uttering inarticulate sounds, then again making the whole church to ring with his dreadful howlings. The priests at length approached him, and, apparently from charitable motives, covered him with a cloak, that he might not be known; they then replaced the candlestick on the altar, raised up the man whose convulsions still continued, and carried him away to the infirmary of the convent, whilst the people made the church echo with the cries of "a miracle!" "a miracle!" "glory to the blessed St. Martin!"

The shouts had scarcely subsided, when Volusianus admonished the faithful, saying that an accident of such frequent occurrence in the church of Tours, many of which they must have seen during the year, ought no longer to withdraw their attention from a much more wonderful circumstance, to witness which they had been summoned.

"Stand forth, son of the senator Florentius," said he to Felix, whom the monks now led forward, and who, the instant he heard the music of the Franks, had been taken to his cell, and therefore knew nothing of what was passing;

“stand forth, and pay homage to the truth in
“the presence of this assembled people. Speak,
“what woman did you meet in the ruins of Heso-
“dunum; what woman did you support with
“your arm, as you came out of the ancient
“fortress?”

“Julia,” replied Felix, “daughter to the se-
“nator and count of Chartres, Julius Severus.”

“The daughter of the impious apostate, the
“idolater,” cried immediately a thousand voices,
in every part of the church.

“Were you not suddenly plunged into deep
“darkness, in a cavern without an opening?
“Did not the rocks oppose your passage?”

“The stone gates of the cavern were certainly
“closed upon us, and we remained in dark-
“ness.”

“A miracle! a miracle!” exclaimed the mul-
titude; “darkness did you seek with the idola-
“ter, and darkness was your portion.”

“Did you remain alone in the dark, or did
“any one approach you?”

“Violent hands seized my companion, and
“attempted to wrest her from me—”

“A miracle! a miracle!” repeated the crowd,
“the prince of darkness came to carry off his
“prey.”

“What is the name of the religious man

“ you thought you saw near you when light
“ was restored ?”

“ He told me his name was father Andrew.”

“ Ah ! the blessed father Andrew ! Father An-
“ drew the powerful intercessor !” said the peo-
ple, “ protect us, deliver us from all evil.”

“ Were you not bound with cords ? Did
“ not father Andrew cause them to drop from
“ your hands ?”

“ He commanded the cords to be taken off
“ with which he himself had ordered me to be
“ bound.”

“ Hear him—ungrateful wretch that he is ;”
cried the people, “ he accuses his benefactor,
“ his deliverer.”

“ Citizens of Tours,” said Felix, “ I was
“ charged with a negotiation for your interest ;
“ it was for your sake, in your defence, that I
“ trusted myself in the hands of the barbarians,
“ that I treated with Clovis at Soissons, that I
“ obtained for you his protection, and saved you
“ from the attacks of the Franks. I had just
“ rendered you these services, when I was un-
“ justly seized, forcibly bound, and dragged
“ into this convent, where until now I have
“ been immured as a prisoner.”

“ The Franks are in this very temple,” re-
plied Volusianus, “ and you yourself are the

“ cause that they are here ; is this what you call
“ saving us from the attacks of the Franks ?
“ But let us proceed. Did not father Andrew
“ make you eat of the bread of the Lord, and
“ drink of his cup ? ”

“ Yes, he caused a slight repast to be spread
“ in the ruins of Hesodunum. ”

“ The bread of life. The cup of redemp-
“ tion, ” cried the people.

“ Did you perceive the manner in which
“ father Andrew transported you to the gate of
“ our convent ? ”

“ No, my eyes were covered with the cowl of
“ these monkish weeds, which, when my hands
“ were tied, they forced me to wear. ”

“ But did you perceive any rough motion of
“ horses or carriages ? ”

“ No, on the contrary, methought I glided
“ down the Loire in a boat. ”

“ What motion can be more gentle than
“ that of angels’ wings ! ” cried the people, to
whom the monks, spread over the different parts
of the church, often suggested remarks, which
the people afterwards proclaimed aloud.

“ Accursed be the pretended angels who car-
“ ried me away, ” exclaimed Felix with great
warmth. “ One of them I threw on the earth
“ in the cavern of Hesodunum ; with this hand

“ I griped his throat; would to God I had
“ strangled him.”

“ The demoniac is raving; the unclean spirit
“ has resumed his empire,” cried the spectators.

The priests immediately began to thunder out the litanies appointed for the deliverance of the possessed, and to deluge Felix with holy water; finding that anger was useless, he repressed his feelings, and resuming an appearance of tranquillity, turned to Volusianus, and begged him to continue.

“ What do you suppose,” said Volusianus,
“ is become of the wretched daughter of Se-
“ verus?”

“ We came together into the court close by,
“ and whilst I entered into the convent of the
“ men, she was taken into that of the women.”

“ I desire my brethren,” said Volusianus,
“ that by this you do all judge of the number-
“ less illusions to which the unfortunate young
“ man has been the prey. From the moment
“ when, in the violence of his derangement, he
“ laid sacrilegious hands on an anointed of the
“ Lord, what he thought he saw, had no longer
“ any shape, what he fancied he heard, had
“ no longer any sound, and what he imagined
“ he touched, had no longer any substance.

“ He fancied that the daughter of the infidel
“ had entered into our sacred inclosures. You
“ know under what severe regulations those
“ holy virgins live, who have placed themselves
“ under the protection of the blessed St. Martin.
“ How could Julia have entered there without my
“ order? How could she have departed thence
“ without my permission? Now shall you be
“ convinced that she is not in the convent.
“ The eyes of men must surely not defile its
“ sacred walls. But for the sake of the Franks,
“ who are not yet enlightened by faith, and
“ to accomplish the triumph of truth, I grant
“ the pious matron, Sylvia Numantia, and
“ the women whom she shall choose, a dis-
“ pensation of our rule. Let them enter the
“ convent; let them examine every part of it
“ from one extremity to the other, and then
“ return and tell us if the daughter of Julius
“ Severus be there, or if there remain any ap-
“ pearance of her having been in the convent.
“ Go,” said he to one of the officers, “ conduct
“ Sylvia and her attendants to the convent.”

Sylvia, accompanied by twelve matrons of
Tours, entered the convent. She surveyed every
part of it; visited every hall, every cell, and
even the most secret places; they led her, with
apparent indifference, into the subterraneous

dungeons, the damp walls and deep darkness of which filled her with horror. They opened several trap-doors, apparently intended to conceal the victims of monastic despotism; the vaults thus unclosed were empty; they made her even visit the tombs, and without expressing the idea they wished to convey, they took pains to convince her that no living being was shut up among the dead; that no corse had been recently deposited in the sepulchre. After a minute search, Sylvia, overwhelmed with grief, returned, and declared to Julius Severus, to Felix, and to the whole assembly, that the friend she sought was not in the convent. This report, which was received by Severus and Felix with extreme anguish, was greeted by the people with every demonstration of joy and triumph, as if it cleared up every doubt respecting the authenticity of the miracle. The priests pronounced a canticle of thanksgiving, repeating which the crowd dispersed,

CHAP. VI.



FATHER ANDREW.

“ Without heresy it cannot be asserted that in ecclesiastical affairs, any one can dispense with obedience to the priest of the Lord, or to the bishop to whom he has committed the care of his flock ; nor that any one can assume a power which neither God nor man has confided to us.”—*Gregory of Tours, book 2, chap. 23, p. 173.*

AFTER the triumph Volusianus had just obtained, no very important advantage could accrue from detaining Felix at Tours. The belief that he had been miraculously brought to the convent of St. Martin, was firmly established among the people ; they who had assisted at the confrontation, fancied the miracle was confirmed by his own confession ; after this all the explanations Felix gave, all the circumstances he related concerning his captivity, were not sufficient to destroy the general impression. The Franks, who, generally speaking, could not understand what had been said, but had wit-

nessed the examination of Felix, and the effect it had upon the people, were rather inclined to confirm than to contradict the pretended miracle: there was no doubt they would confirm what St. Remy had reported to Clovis respecting the adventure at Hesodunum; and that king, who had already given as great proofs of his credulity as of his bravery, would not be unwilling to believe that his bride had been carried off by devils, provided Julia herself did not re-appear to belie the reports of the two prelates, the inhabitants of Tours, and the soldiers of Theodoric.

The monks who stood around Felix consequently allowed him to approach his mother and to embrace her as she was about to enter the nunnery: after which he was permitted to remain by the side of Julius Severus and the Franks, with whom he quitted the church as soon as Sylvia declared her researches had been unsuccessful.

But Felix now thought little of the liberty he had just regained: he was absorbed in sorrow; and although he strove to comfort Julius Severus; although he assured him, that from his own observations he thought the priests and monks into whose hands he had fallen were incapable of any atrocious crime, still his imagination

was filled with most dreadful forebodings. Sometimes he pictured to himself Julia immured in a subterraneous dungeon, deprived of all communication with human creatures, that her existence might remain unknown; at other times he shuddered at the thought that she might already have fallen a sacrifice to the fanaticism and political wickedness of men who, when they mentioned her name, never failed to hint they thought her worthy of death.

Sylvia's researches in the convent had proved to her the horrid situation of a captive in the power of the nuns; some of the dungeons she had entered left in her mind an inexpressible impression of terror, which often escaped her, in spite of her efforts to conceal it.

Julius Severus, on his side, augmented the alarm of Felix and his mother, by communicating to them the measures he had already taken, but which, as yet had been unsuccessful. Foreseeing that at his approach Volusianus might be tempted to remove his captive to a distance, he had beforehand posted on all the roads near Tours, trusty individuals to observe the travellers, and in case of need, to carry them off by main force: he had gained over some spies even in the cathedral, and Lamia had procured him the assistance of two bagaudæ, who had

shared in the seizure of Felix and Julia, and had afterwards taken them to Tours: these two fugitives gave most exact information relative to all the circumstances of that adventure; but since that time they had heard no more of Julia, and knew not what was become of her. Severus had reckoned more upon them than on the Franks, for the recovery of his daughter. He had hoped those *bagaudæ* would have been aware of the time when Volusianus caused his daughter to depart, and advise Dumnorix thereof: this latter, with a certain number of shepherds, lay concealed in the woods near Tours, ready to deliver Julia from the hands of her ravishers. All these precautions had been taken in vain: the spies could give no information; Dumnorix had made no discovery; and the other agents of Severus, keeping watch on the different roads, had seen no travellers pass.

“We have but one expedient left,” said Severus: “let us take off Volusianus himself, and his head shall answer for my daughter.”

“I doubt,” replied Sylvia, “whether such a man would reveal his secret and discover his infamy, even to save his head.”—

“And I,” observed Theodoric, “doubt much whether my Franks would raise their hands against him. The priest appears to them

“ more than a man, above all since they saw
“ that fellow disguised in the Frank dress fall
“ down after stretching forth his hand to seize
“ the candlestick.”

“ I have still some hopes,” said Sylvia, “ that
“ this farce is only designed to impose upon
“ the vulgar. Volusianus cannot seriously be-
“ lieve we shall add faith to the prodigies he
“ narrates, rather than to the evidence of our
“ own senses, when I myself witnessed the
“ seizure, when Felix, one of the victims, is
“ here present, and can point out the very spot
“ where he was separated from Julia. Let us
“ go once more to the prelate, but without so
“ many attendants; he will surely give to us a
“ more rational answer.”

“ Volusianus has spoken for the people,” re-
plied Severus, “ because it is for the opinion of
“ the people alone that he cares: he feels mean-
“ while a cruel pleasure in speaking to us as to
“ children, and injuring us as men.”

“ Let me speak to the priest,” said Theodo-
ric; “ I can see pretty clearly that the prison
“ of the captive must be opened by the battle-
“ axe, not by honied words.”

Felix, Severus, Theodoric, and Sylvia imme-
diately proceeded to the bishop's palace, and de-
manded a private audience of Volusianus, which

they obtained without difficulty. The prelate did not appear at all embarrassed by their presence; he did not avoid resuming the subject of the former discussion; but to their most pressing intreaties he opposed a tone of fervour, conviction, and paternal affection which entirely disconcerted them, and gave them no opportunity to threaten him, although such was their object in demanding the interview. "It belongeth not to me," said he, "to explain the ways of the Almighty, or to give reasons for his miracles by human means; Felix was delivered to my hands in a miraculous manner. It would have conduced to his salvation had he continued the devout exercises he had commenced in the temple of God; but now he is free, at least he wears no chain but that of sin. Julia, who, perhaps, was laden with heavier shackles, would also have been liberated by me had she been conducted to the same place. I feel for the distressing anxiety of a father, a lover, a friend; no other assistance can I offer to you but that of my prayers; they at least shall be as fervent as sincere; be assured also that I shall never regard as an offence, the injurious suspicions and the violent language wrested from you by your agonizing situation,

“and by an error you cannot repel from your minds.”

His meekness was constantly evinced, in spite of the direct accusations and furious threats which despair dictated to Severus and Felix. He seemed ever above insult, causing it to sink before him, so that he appeared great even in the eyes of his accusers. “Your life shall answer for hers,” at length cried Felix, with the impulse of maddened grief.

“For thine eternal salvation do I answer before God,” replied he with the voice of affection, “to save that joyfully would I part with mortal life: in the violence with which thou threatenest me I see no danger save that of thine own soul.”

“If you have any feeling for the agonies of a father,” said Severus, “blush at holding a language which can deceive none but children or an ignorant rabble. You see before you senators and soldiers—to them, at least, speak as to men.”

“I know well,” replied Volusianus, “that with the infidel the truth of faith is deemed a folly. But I should blush indeed, were I, from respect to man to disguise it, or to fit my language to the dignity of those who listen to me.”

“Old man,” at length exclaimed Theodoric,
“I am come with my Franks to witness deeds,
“not to hear words; restore to this Gaul whom
“the Franks honour, his daughter, thy captive,
“or with this hand, which I now lift over thy
“head, will I fasten thy beard to the tail of my
“horse, and thus drag thee to the forests of
“Toxandria.”

“God grant there may remain to me,” calmly
replied Volusianus, “strength enough on my
“arrival to bless the Franks: gladly will I thus
“commence the work of the Lord, which other
“apostles, more fortunate than I, will some day
“complete. Thou shalt find me prepared both
“to preach the word of God and to suffer holy
“martyrdom.”

A Frank never heard with indifference the
language of true courage—Theodoric drew back,
struck with involuntary respect for the aged
prelate.

Felix was almost persuaded that Volusianus
was himself in error: he wished to believe that
such unshaken firmness was that of virtue. He
asked to see father Andrew, to hear him explain
the nature of his mission to Hesodunum; but
Volusianus replied, that father Andrew had
quitted Tours more than a week since; he was
gone on a mission concerning ecclesiastical af-

fairs; and as he was to make an extensive circuit, it was impossible to say in what place he might now be met with.

Julius Severus knew other witnesses, other agents, employed in the seizure of his daughter: these were the two bagaudæ, who had conducted father Andrew to the ruins of Hesodunum, and who now, gained over by Lamia, served as spies for Severus in the cathedral. But these two unfortunate wretches had so lively a sense of the danger to which they would be exposed by offending the archbishop and clergy of Tours, that it was impossible to make them speak publicly. It now appeared certain the conference could not have a favourable result; Severus, therefore, retired with his friends, but declared his intention of remaining at Tours for the purpose of continuing his researches.

The first thought of Severus was to attack the palace of the archbishop in the night, to seize Volusianus, with the abbess of the convent of St. Mary, and some other hostages, and to carry them over to Chartres: but the leaders of the Franks, or Antrushions, when consulted, refused to execute this design. They declared, they and their soldiers had already eaten of the bread of Volusianus, and sat at his table, and therefore would never commit any violence

against him. This respect for the laws of hospitality was not always so powerful over their minds; but the prelate of Tours appeared to them a superhuman being, and they never turned their eyes towards him without dread: Severus could, consequently, expect no assistance from them in the furtherance of his plans.

Severus now consulted the two bagaudæ whom Lamia had attached to his interest: he hoped he should discover by their means some other of the agents employed to seize his daughter. But the only new information he could obtain, was, that father Andrew had been sent to Poitiers, and that his departure had been veiled in the deepest mystery.

This departure of father Andrew for Poitiers appeared to Felix as a ray of light. The authors of their seizure had selected that priest to bring them to Tours, it was therefore probable they might also have chosen him to accompany Julia when circumstances rendered it necessary to remove her still farther. Felix now felt certain that Julia had been conducted to some convent of Poitiers, or, if she had not been left in that neighbourhood, he thought at least that father Andrew in passing through that city, and not thinking himself pursued, would have been less cautious in concealing his subsequent route. It

was also to be observed that since Felix had been in the power of the priests, father Andrew was the only man who had told him the truth, unmixt with fraud; he was the only man who, although implicitly obeying the orders of his superiors, evinced sincere compassion for the woes he had himself caused, and testified an unfeigned desire to serve his victim. Felix was far from expecting that Andrew in his wish to assist him would swerve from any of the orders he had received, but he thought that priest would not deceive him; and that could either information, comfort, or hope be given, Andrew, at least, would not deny it. He resolved, therefore, to depart immediately for Poitiers, leaving Severus and his mother at Tours with Theodoric and the Franks. In order, if possible, to gain some information respecting the fate of Julia, these latter were to use, in turn, promises and threats with the subalterns of the cathedral, with all, in short, who might be enticed by the hope of reward, or terrified by the fear of punishment.

Severus and Sylvia, seeing that all hopes of terrifying Volusianus by means of the Franks were fled, approved of Felix's intended journey. Diocles, who had accompanied Sylvia to Tours with the horses and luggage of his master, whom

they hoped to bring back to Noviliacum, was ordered to keep all in readiness for his departure. Severus wrote to the Roman Count Gallus, the governor of Poitiers, and to the Goth *Œgila*, who commanded a small band of soldiers in the pay of Alaric the Second: he recommended them to assist his friend and intended son-in-law in the researches he was about to make for Julia. He was acquainted, and had some interest, with those officers. Felix Florentius had also had occasion to correspond with Adelphius, bishop of Poitiers: this prelate was not less a secret enemy to the Visigoths whom he obeyed, and a favourer of the Franks, than Volusianus; but the authority of Adelphius in Poitiers was far from equalling that of the bishop of Tours; his power was limited by that of the Roman count and the Visigoth commander; and although he might be ill-disposed, Felix had reason to believe that should Julia be in Poitiers he could succeed in restoring her to liberty.

After a journey of two days Felix arrived at Poitiers, and, aided by the inquiries of Diocles, soon discovered the dwelling of father Andrew. He presented himself before the priest, and was struck with the extraordinary change he observed in his countenance: his cheeks were now

pallid, his eyes hollow, and sorrow had imprinted its deep furrows on his brow; grief had succeeded to that air of gentle confidence and peaceful conscience which formerly characterized his physiognomy. When Andrew saw Felix enter his cell, a ray of joy beamed in his eyes. "Praised be the Almighty," cried he, "one at least of the victims of my fatal obedience is restored to liberty; but where is the other? What account can I render of her before the judgment-seat of God?"

"From you," replied Felix, alarmed by this exclamation, "from you I come to seek information respecting her. Can it be that you know not what is become of Julia Severa?"

"Volusianus took care not to confide to me a secret I should never have kept. Wo to me! for I listened to the voice of man rather than to the voice of God! Wo to me! for I thought my own judgment and conscience should yield to canonical obedience. By fulfilling the orders of my bishop I fancied I should preserve Gaul from a deadly apostacy; I fancied I was only executing the mandates of rigid justice against persons already condemned by the canons of the church. Me he deluded respecting the faith of Julia, and her projects, and the dangers with which he said

“ we were threatened. The people he hath de-
“ luded respecting the means employed to com-
“ plete his designs: he hath given to the angels
“ of heaven what was the work of his own sinful
“ hands; he hath blazoned false miracles; he
“ hath pretended that I swayed demons and
“ angels, while I, poor unhappy sinner, am bit-
“ terly bewailing the crime he hath made me to
“ commit.”

All the hopes of Felix vanished as soon as he heard Andrew ask tidings of Julia. He already began, in his own mind, to blame the precipitancy of his journey to Poitiers, by which he had lost four days, far from the city in which she was probably still concealed; nevertheless the interest Andrew seemed to feel in his affairs, the sincere contrition he evinced, the marks of grief and anxiety he bore on his countenance, made a deep impression on his heart. He interrogated the priest respecting the change he appeared to have undergone in opinions and principles. Andrew replied with noble frankness. Educated in a convent, knowing men only by the perusal of monkish volumes, contemplating politics as far only as they related to the triumph of religion, he had ever placed implicit faith in his ecclesiastical superiors. Never had the shadow of a doubt crossed his mind re-

specting either the truth of their words, the propriety of their orders, or the authenticity of the miracles they attested. Endowed with good sense, with long-tried prudence, and with undaunted courage, Andrew had recommended himself to the notice of the bishop of Tours; he had been employed by him in various perilous missions, in which he had always acquitted himself with success. He had visited the camps of nearly all the barbarian tribes, ransoming captives, recovering the stolen relics of saints, and preaching the gospel. The rectitude of his character had every where gained him respect: he had been honoured even by those he could not persuade; and so firmly did he believe the word he preached, that they who were not convinced by his arguments were often attracted by their confidence in the faith of so upright a man.

When, on the news of the approaching marriage of Clovis, Volusianus, combining with St. Remy, resolved on arresting the bride, who had spread so much terror among the clergy, he chose father Andrew for the expedition. The prelate wanted some man endowed with a strong mind, capable of acting alone, and shifting his plans according to circumstances; a man of courage, who would pass a night or even se-

veral successive ones, in caves where the timid herd of monks would never have dared to descend; a man who would fearlessly associate with the fugitive bagaudæ, Volusianus was obliged to employ, they being the only persons acquainted with the Celtic ruins; who, by the superiority of his character, might gain such empire over them as to ensure their fidelity in the execution of the undertaking. Volusianus wanted also the assistance of some virtuous man, who, charged with the seizure of a damsel of extraordinary beauty, would remain proof against temptation, against all thoughts injurious to the honour of her who was about to be left defenceless in his power. Although Volusianus was sacrificing Julia to the general good of the church, he would have shuddered at the idea of exposing her virtue to the slightest stain. It must also be remarked that the interest of the priesthood imposed upon him the duty of guarding his victim's chastity. The public more willingly forgives crafty and cruel deeds in priests, than immoral actions. To them it is less dangerous to be convicted of causing women and children to perish by fire, than to be suspected of attempts against female chastity.

Very few priests possessed the various qualifications Volusianus wanted to find united, for

the mission in which he employed father Andrew. In choosing, therefore, that ecclesiastic, he combated his first scruples; nay, in order to destroy them, he carried his condescension so far as to lay before him all his correspondence with St. Remy, and all the knowledge they had both gained respecting the character and schemes of Severus. Father Andrew was astonished: this was the first time he had received from his superior orders directly contrary to the dictates of his conscience. He hesitated, and Volusianus probably perceived it. Urged, however, by a habit of respect and confidence, by a deep sense of humility, and the belief he never could err so long as he obeyed him who had the right of commanding, he promised to execute the orders; and when once he had undertaken the commission, he conscientiously performed what he thought his duty.

His surprise was great when, descending the Loire, he was convinced that Volusianus had given him false information; that Julia Severa was a Christian, that she fostered no dangerous project against the church; that far from desiring to become the chosen bride of Clovis, she dreaded that union, and that her heart was engaged to another. Andrew, when he became acquainted with the young people confided to

his care, could not refrain from feeling some interest for them. He was affected by the pardon they so willingly granted to him; and immediately afterwards he began to doubt whether he ought to forgive himself: instantly he went to Volusianus, less with the intent of giving him an account of his success than to inform him of the new circumstances he had just learnt. But he was utterly confounded at the apathy shewn by the prelate to circumstances which to him appeared so important; at his insensibility to the sufferings of the prisoners, and the agonizing torture to which their parents were exposed; he was confounded at his repeated prohibition, accompanied with threats, from giving Sylvia any information respecting the fate of her son; at his cold-hearted resolution of closing for ever the light of day on the two prisoners, and of suffering them to pine and perish in a dungeon, should they not consent to bind themselves by irrevocable vows; this Volusianus was determined on doing, rather than incur the risk of Clovis's being alienated from the church, by a detection of his schemes.—Clovis now about to become his protector. Andrew, however, heedless of his threats, had transmitted Felix's letter to Sylvia. This was the first time in all his life he had disobeyed his bishop; the first time he had ever pre-

ferred the light of reason to what he had been taught to regard as the duties of his profession; the first time, when feeling a weight on his conscience, he had dispensed with the obligation of immediately confessing it to his ecclesiastical superior. This first act of disobedience was followed by many others; the bonds which hitherto had restrained his life were now broken, although he was unable to enjoy his liberty.

After Andrew had parted from Julia Severa in the court of the cathedral, he had had no communication with her, and had found it impossible to discover what was become of her. He presumed, however, that she had remained in the convent of St. Martin, until Volusianus received intelligence of the expedition undertaken by Theodoric for her deliverance. He thought it highly probable the prelate then caused her to be removed; she had perhaps been sent to another convent. But as yet nunneries were not very numerous in Gaul: those situated in other dioceses were not subject to the immediate authority of Volusianus, and Andrew did not think the bishop would trust to the guard of any other person, a prisoner whose deliverance would have endangered his honour: the priest concluded, therefore, that it would be proper to seek for her, either in the small con-

gregations formed in the diocese of Tours, but which had not yet arisen to the rank of convents, or in some one of the castles belonging to the church.

The fate of Felix had not been veiled in such deep mystery. Andrew soon learnt that he had been introduced into the convent of St. Martin as a demoniac, and there subjected to various exercises preparatory to the expulsion of evil spirits; that his arrival had been represented as miraculous, and attributed to the efficacy of prayer and intercession, although the deed had in reality been effected by violent means, under the direction of himself. This was the first time the tales of wonder, by which the piety of the faithful was fostered, had, in his mind, been convicted of falsehood. With a heart too upright, a soul too open, to conceive the existence of these pious frauds, to which in those days so many distinguished personages of the church scrupled not to descend, he had ever believed religion and truth to be one and the same; and by suffering others to attribute to him miraculous powers which he knew he did not possess, he thought himself a sharer in the abominable guilt of sacrilege. This discovery had filled him with terrific doubts; all his faith was now shaken, and as mere

doubt was in his eyes a mortal sin, sorrow and despair had succeeded to that consolatory piety which until now had animated his bosom: He no longer found any certainty in his feelings or his religion; morals and faith instead of supporting each other, to him appeared opposed; his deeds and thoughts became subjects of remorse; the perturbation of his soul had destroyed his health, and the change in his appearance which had so forcibly struck Felix, he attributed to the iron hand of sorrow and repentance.

Father Andrew had again approached Volusianus, and called on him to contradict a fable, the spreading of which was a gross impiety. But the prelate replied that it was not proper to shake the faith of the weak-minded, by leading them to doubt the miracles of religion; that it was more wise to profit by a belief, which, although it had not truth for its basis, served to support it; that they ought not to reproach themselves for a deception which gained souls to the Almighty, and which Satan alone could complain of; that before all things it was their duty to promote the interest of God and his church, without heeding the means that might conduce thereto. These motives had appeared to Andrew tainted by considerations of worldly

Politics, of which, until now he never durst suspect his superiors guilty. He had insisted on his admonition being attended to ; but Volusianus then assuming another tone, ordered him instantly to depart with secrecy to Poitiers, and not to leave it until recalled.

“At length I obeyed,” said he, “but my
“obedience was a second fault. Reflection and
“solitude have taught me to distinguish my
“duty more clearly. I know the truth, it be-
“hoves me to proclaim it, and cause it to
“triumph. I have been guilty of a heinous crime
“against Julia Severa and yourself, of which
“I owe to God and the world a public confes-
“sion. Already should I have returned to
“Tours to make that confession and seal it
“with my blood ; for full well do I see what
“would have been the consequence ; but the
“bishop of Poitiers retains me here, as it were
“a prisoner. If you have sufficient interest, de-
“liver me from these bonds, and God, who hath
“accepted my repentance, will also vouchsafe
“the grace of a thorough reparation. I it
“was who took from you the chosen bride of
“your heart ; I it was who deprived Julius Se-
“verus of a beloved daughter—I now will endea-
“vour to restore her to you.”

CHAP. VII.

THE PEASANTS.

“ Have they not behaved in such a manner that men exposed to the knavery of judges, to torment, and to death, have turned barbarians because they were no longer allowed to remain Romans? They had completely lost their liberties, and now are they forced to defend their lives. What is done now more than before? Are not they who are still innocent compelled to become *bagaudæ*?”

Salviani de Gubernatione Dei, lib. v. p. 104.

FELIX, in his turn, had related to father Andrew the manner in which he had recovered his liberty, and the new protectors he had gained in the Franks, now quartered at Tours. He described to him the obstinacy with which Volusianus, contemning the evidence of his hearers and of common sense, asserted that he had not shared in the seizure at Hesodunum; that Felix had been placed in his hands by supernatural means; that Julia had disappeared: he informed him how Volusianus had deceived the

rabble, who now firmly believed in a miracle attested, as it were, in their presence.

Andrew, leaning his head on his bosom, pondered on these strange circumstances, and meditated the means of combatting the testimony of a prelate so highly venerated, supported by the power of the clergy, and backed by the credulous fanaticism of the multitude. "If we can," said he, "secretly persuade Volusianus to abandon his error, and induce him by the fear of infamy, to restore Julia to liberty, charity and prudence impose it as a duty upon us. He knows me well. He is aware that no fear will ever cause me to stray from the direct path; he knows that I have some influence over the multitude he has seduced, and that the fable he has just circulated has increased my reputation. Let us hope he will avoid a struggle which must end in his disgrace; let us hope he will accept the conditions you may propose; but should he refuse, then will I ascend the pulpit in the presence of the deluded people—I will give proofs that he has deceived them by a wicked imposture. Truth is more powerful than falsehood; I will repeat his own words; I will speak of the letters he communicated to me, the agents he employed, those to whom I myself transmitted

“ his orders; those to whom, on my return, **E**
“ delivered you both; I will publish what un-
“ willingly I learnt respecting the spies who
“ formerly surrounded you; for even at the
“ time I approved the object proposed to me,
“ I could not refrain from loathing their treach-
“ erous and cowardly actions, disgracing the
“ sacred character with which they were in-
“ vested.”

These last words excited a feeling of profound grief in Felix. “ Is it possible,” he exclaimed, “ that Martin who educated me; that Martin on whom we have showered benefactions——”

“ I believe, at least I am willing to believe,
“ not only that he had not formed any evil design
“ against you, but that he was not aware of the
“ use that would be made against Julia by his
“ discoveries. But I am certain that by his
“ means all the actions and projects of your
“ mother were known at the cathedral; and
“ that the bishop was informed of the intended
“ excursion to Hesodunum a long time before
“ it took place; that Martin even contrived to
“ have it deferred until we were ready. I know,
“ also, that he suggested some other plan of
“ seizure, which failed, and in which I had no
“ share. He was not able to bear the idea of
“ seeing you again; he has quitted Noviliacum,

“ where you will meet him no more, as he has
“ been rewarded for his services with a rich be-
“ nefice. I was thinking of the shameful per-
“ fidy of such spies when at the entrance of the
“ convent, I warned you against confiding in
“ those who surrounded you; but it appears
“ that Volusianus had no longer need of learn-
“ ing your secret thoughts.”

The firmness of father Andrew, his unshaken resolution of making amends for the evil he had caused, revived the hopes of Felix. Were Julia still living, he thought himself certain of being able to burst the doors of her prison; but was it not too late? He durst not communicate all his fears; but Andrew understood him: his countenance darkened, his eyes were suffused with tears, but he refused not to answer.

“ Perhaps,” said he, “ Volusianus desires the
“ death of his captive; it is possible he may ex-
“ pose her, without remorse, to sufferings which,
“ if prolonged, would probably endanger her
“ life; but never will he order an assassination;
“ and I think, nay, I can venture to affirm, that
“ he would be equally reluctant to order a
“ public execution. One hundred and ten
“ years have passed since the first blood was
“ shed in Gaul under pretence of punishing
“ errors in faith: then indeed a matron of Bor-

“ deaux was put to death for swerving from orthodoxy; but the glorious predecessor of Volusianus, St. Martin himself, proclaimed his horror at the cruel deed. That noble example Volusianus will not forget: yet do I shudder at the thought of the snares with which Julia will be beset, and of the horrid punishments they will think themselves authorized to inflict on her, should her faith not be found spotless. This fear sharpens the remorse which I feel for what I have already done.”

Felix, petrified with horror, placed his hand on his brow and remained some time motionless, his heart torn with anguish. Andrew, who was not less grieved, thus continued, in order to divert his thoughts:—

“ Now that you are here, it would perhaps be prudent to make some researches in the convents of Poitiers; although I do not think Julia has been brought so far. She is still at Tours, in one of the retreats dependent on the archbishop, or perhaps she remains concealed in some one of the small congregations which have been formed in that diocese. All the ruins, all the caverns, all the fastnesses, which during the days of persecution served as shelters for some pious recluses, and are now famed for the miracles performed by their

“ relics, have been converted into sanctuaries,
“ adorned with chapels, and appropriated to the
“ church. All those holy spots I know; most of
“ their guardians put trust in me, nay, are wont
“ to obey the orders it was once my duty to de-
“ liver to them. Some of these, situate near our
“ route, will we visit ere we return to Tours:
“ God, who chasteneth us, but afterwards re-
“ sumeth his mercy, will, perhaps, grant that
“ before the set of to-morrow’s sun, I may re-
“ store her whom I had no right to take from
“ you.”

Revived by this hope, Felix resolved on not losing one moment in the prosecution of his inquiries. He presented himself before the Roman count, Gallus, and the Goth, Ægila, then commanding at Poitiers: he was received by them with the honours due to his rank. Ægila was an Arian, Gallus was more attentive to politics than to religion; both were decidedly opposed to the encroachments of the church, both watched with mistrust the bishop of Poitiers. They willingly gave the necessary orders for the restoration of father Andrew to full liberty, so that he might quit Poitiers and return to Tours. They also caused diligent search to be made in the convents and religious establishments of the dio-

case, and assured Felix that Julia Severa had not been conveyed to their city.

Early the following morning, Felix Florentius and Andrew departed from Poitiers on horseback. Since the decline of the empire the highways were so much decayed that it was impossible to use a carriage. They were attended by Diocles, with two slaves and two sumpter mules to carry the luggage and provisions. In the large cities lodgings were to be obtained in a kind of inns, then called *diversoria*; but in the small towns and hamlets, travellers were obliged to provide every thing for themselves: yet hospitality was a rite rendered sacred by the law; and the traveller knocking at the gate of the cottage which appeared the most opulent, obliged the owner of the dwelling to assist him, and to give him shelter.

Thus the party arrived at the fall of the first day, at Iciodorum, or Iseurre upon the Creuse. This village, in which St. Bris had lately founded a church, was now inhabited by about a score of those families of peasants, called Fiscalins, as they belonged to the fiscal, and not to private owners. These were the property of the city of Tours, with the curia of which they divided the products of their agriculture. The peasant of

whom Felix demanded hospitality, besides the tillage of his fields carried on a little trade, so that by its exterior appearance, his house promised a more comfortable lodging than the others. The door was new; the cloth frames which closed the windows were untorn; a large heap of dung on one side of the door indicated the possession of much cattle, and a still greater heap of firewood on the opposite side shewed that the owner was prepared to face the inclemency of the winter. The size of the edifice was no proof of the condition of its inmates; Iseurre had been built for a population much more numerous than that which now inhabited it. The town erected on the slope, and constructed of stone, presented on the river side an appearance of opulence and regularity; the houses arose to the height of three or four stories, although, on the side towards the hill, the entrance was by the upper story; they were extensive and airy; but the greater part were deserted, and hardly were there twenty that contained any inhabitants.

Diocles knocked at the door of the cottage his master had fixed upon: he said to the peasant who answered the summons: "the Roman senator, Felix Florentius, demands your hospitality for this night. He does not intend to exercise

“the rights he may claim by the laws of the
“barbarians; he will give you no cause to re-
“pent the opening of your doors.”

The peasant, encouraged by this promise, called back his children, some of whom were busied in driving his cattle from the stalls, while others were concealing all the valuable articles contained in the kitchen, to which room the stranger was to be admitted. The Burgundian code, subsequently copied by the other barbarians, punished by a fine of six pieces of gold, the peasant who refused a lodging to the traveller, or who in the case of the stranger being of a distinguished rank, did not allow him to take from the stable a pig or a sheep for his supper, with fodder for his beasts of burthen. The poor man, however, thus obliged to offer an hospitality to the rich, far beyond his means, was seldom recompensed; nay, he was often robbed of his most valuable property by the slaves of his guests.

Felix did not travel in this manner; he lodged, it was true, under the roof of the peasant or yeoman, whose house promised the greatest convenience, for in those days such was the only means of obtaining any shelter; but he made amends for the trouble he occasioned by presents, and invited him, under whose roof he

passed the night, to share the supper prepared by his slaves. The general benevolence imprinted on his countenance, the interest he appeared to take in the welfare of the family, the caresses he gave to the children, soon brought him acquainted with all the inmates of the household in which he was obliged to remain for a short time; and the hospitality he obtained under the sanction of the law, was to him a bond of affection and confidence.

Father Andrew knew, at Iseurre, a holy virgin, who had consecrated the whole of her small patrimony to God and the poor: not being rich enough to found a convent, she took for the companions of her prayers, two or three young devout virgins, with whom she divided her small income. Her house, situate some distance from the village, was, according to common report, sanctified by the residence of some persecuted Christians in the days of paganism. Andrew thought it possible Julia Severa might be confided to the care of this religious lady: but when he asked tidings of her, he was informed the *bagaudæ* had ransacked her house, and led her into captivity, and for some weeks past no intelligence respecting her had been received.

“Have you, then,” said Felix, “any wandering *bagaudæ* in this neighbourhood?”

“ Indeed have we,” replied the peasant, “ on
“ all sides they surround us: not a day passes
“ but some ancient family of industrious hus-
“ bandmen quit their cottage, their fields and
“ their teams, to retire to the woods, there to
“ live by plunder.”

“ Is it possible?” replied Felix, “ that men
“ who have enjoyed the protection of the laws,
“ that men who have tasted the sweets of ci-
“ vilized life, can willingly return to the savage
“ state of barbarism; can abandon their houses,
“ their property, their comforts,—for what—
“ to wage war against mankind?”

“ Senator, when you speak of laws protecting
“ us, surely you must be unacquainted with the
“ state of the peasants in Gaul! Where are the
“ sweets we can taste—where the comforts we
“ can enjoy;—where the property we can call
“ our own?”

“ Why—this house, in which you now re-
“ ceive me, shelters you from the inclemency of
“ the weather.”

“ House, indeed—senator, this house exposes
“ me to more uneasiness than would a hut of
“ clay roofed with leaves. It is the best in the vil-
“ lage, and for that very reason here do all your
“ counts, your revenue officers, your prelates,
“ your soldiers, come to lodge. To be sure, it

“ is mine, as long as it does not suit the purpose
“ of any one more powerful than myself; but
“ how often have I been thrust out with my
“ wife and children, to seek shelter where I
“ could, ay, and even when the ground was
“ covered with snow !”

“ At least you have some cattle in your stalls,
“ corn in your barns, and wine in your bins;—
“ such a man as you cannot possibly know what
“ lack of food is.”

“ Senator, you did well not to add that I have
“ money in my coffers. Now 'tis money that
“ the fiscal and the count of Tours are ever de-
“ manding of me. The crops you are talking
“ about I must sell—I can't enjoy them : I must
“ turn them into money, and money must I
“ find, even when no one offers me any in ex-
“ change. My teams can no longer be called
“ my own ; day after day must I toil with them,
“ carrying my own crops to the public gra-
“ naries, drawing away whatever the govern-
“ ment chooses to fix on ; or completing all
“ kinds of public works. If my oxen or my
“ horses sink with weariness, I and my sons
“ are scourged by the orders of a barbarous
“ steward. Society has for a long time been
“ waging war against us, why then should not
“ we, in our turn, wage war against society ?”

“ Your person at least is safe, while the bagaudæ, driven back to their forests, pursued from fastness to fastness, are killed like wild beasts in their lairs, or, if taken to the cities, are executed on the scaffold.”

“ Said you that my person was safe ! Pray who defends me against the soldiers ? Who defends me against the barbarians ? Who defends me against the robbers ? The peasant of Gaul enjoys not one moment of security, not one moment of comfort, not one moment of happiness. See what our race is come to ; see how the villages are now deserted. My great grandfather was wont to tell my father that here he had seen five hundred hearths, and my father used to complain of the hardness of his times, because a hundred only were left. Now, forsooth, hardly can we count a score ;—little did my father think, poor man, that one of his sons would become a bagauda, and the other be ready to follow his example ?”

“ Have you then a brother with the bagaudæ ?”

“ Poor fellow ; he was not made for such a life ; but the excess of wretchedness wearied his patience. His house stood the third on the left-hand as you go hance ; it was a goodly

“ house, well built, and larger than this: now
“ alas ! ’tis deserted; the fields he tilled lie
“ fallow. The fiscal agents seized his crops,
“ carried off his cattle, sold all his valuables,
“ heedless of the losses my poor brother had
“ sustained in the hard service of the govern-
“ ment. One of his sons fell sick, and died in
“ want and misery. No sooner had Procer
“ Nunnianus closed the eyes of his child, than,
“ maddened with grief, he rushed to the forest
“ with his wife and the remainder of his family.
“ The fiscal ruined him.—Well, the fiscal is
“ not the richer for it;—there is one honest
“ man the less in Iseurre.”

Father Andrew had listened without interrupting the peasant, to whom they were indebted for a lodging; but now he spoke to encourage, to console, to appease his host: this he did with a devotion, a feeling, a pity for the poor, and such a confidence in the promised rewards of another life, that Felix was as much surprised and affected as he to whom the discourse was directly addressed. The peasant’s picture of the woes of his country had increased his melancholy, and added to the despondency caused by his own misfortunes. Could he expect to find happiness himself, when so many

were unfortunate; when neither prudence, nor probity, nor industry, could shelter from misery? What guarantee could he find in his own heart against the fear of losing Julia for ever—against the dreadful idea that she might now be pining in a dungeon? Father Andrew's confidence in the protection of divine providence revived his courage. His present woes were not lessened; the probability was still the same that all his hopes would be balked; but the good priest, instead of suffering the thoughts of Felix to be fixed on the present moment, had directed them to a more distant point: he had reminded him, in a forcible manner, that other hopes may begin where those of the world end; at the same time he appeared so deeply affected with compassion for the trials of this life, so firmly convinced of future and endless bliss, that he made his hearers share his sentiments: he first attempered his mind to theirs, and then raised them, with himself, above the earth.

“Good father,” observed the peasant, “it shall not be said you have spoken in vain. Never will Nupnianus join the bagaudæ: he will bow in patience before the miseries of this life, thinking of what awaits him in the next. In the exchange for the good you

“ have done me, I should wish to render you
“ some service; but here in my house, sur-
“ rounded by my neighbours, in the midst of
“ that society which the senator is pleased to
“ call civilized, I can neither defend myself,
“ nor become useful to a friend or a guest.
“ My brother in the woods, unsheltered by any
“ roof, possessing no barns, no flocks, no pro-
“ perty, although an outlaw, is much more
“ powerful than I. Should you ever fall into
“ his hands, mention the name of Nunnianus,
“ shew him this piece of our father’s cloak; he
“ will know it, and perhaps his hospitality may
“ be more useful to you than mine.” Saying
these words the peasant tore from an old mantle
of coarse stuff, woven with various colours, a
shred, which he gave to father Andrew. The
priest, without setting much value on this re-
commendatory symbol, received it with an ex-
pression of gratitude, and secured it in his
purse.

Meanwhile beds of moss and fern were spread,
by the daughters of Nunnianus, in the four
corners of the hall, where the strangers had
supped: on these they reposed, while the pea-
sant retired with his family to the stables and
store-rooms, which occupied the remainder of
the house.

The following day our travellers resumed their journey, Felix leaving a present in Nunianus's hands, which excited his gratitude almost as much as the consolatory exhortations of father Andrew.

The intention of this latter was to visit at Loches the sanctuary of St. Senoch, who, a few years since, had retired there to live in penance. Loches was indeed situate at some distance from the direct road; but St. Senoch, having constructed a hermitage amid the ruins of an ancient tower upon the Indre, many pious persons flocked around him, hastening to learn, under his direction, the path to salvation. Thus, at a later period, was formed the convent of Loches; but at this time the penitents of both sexes were under no common rules. Among the females whom Senoch directed, and who, although not absolutely nuns, lived entirely dependent on ecclesiastical authority, Andrew thought it not improbable he might find Julia Severa.

The priest added another reason for taking this route, a reason, which, in the mind of Felix, was not so important as in his own. "Of human things," said he, "none are concealed from the eyes of St. Senoch. He has renounced the pomps and vanities of this world,

“His eyes are incessantly fixed on the light of
“heaven; by that light he sees all that exists.
“Never will he permit the bishop of Tours to
“bring disgrace on the church; he will tell us
“where the captive is concealed; he will restore
“her to us.”

Felix was inclined to venerate every one whose conduct excited the respect of so honest a man as father Andrew. The uprightness, however, of the priest's heart did not appear to be equalled by the rectitude of his judgment. He saw that the blind faith which induced him to believe all the information he had received, formed, at times, a singular contrast with the natural precision of his mind; he saw that Andrew, although undeceived respecting Volusianus, was not so with regard to any other of the ecclesiastical authorities; but that he believed all priests and saints possessed the same uprightness as himself; so that the ardour with which he attempted to compensate the injury he had committed, proceeded as much from his zeal for the honour of the clergy, disgraced by an unworthy brother, as from his repentance. When Felix, therefore, demanded some further particulars concerning St. Senoch, as they travelled towards Loches, he did not feel himself obliged to place implicit confidence in the

miraculous powers attributed to the hermit by his companion.

“ St. Senoch,” said father Andrew, “ is of the
 “ Taifali * nation ; he belongs to that barbarous
 “ horde, which, coming from the extremities of
 “ Asia, and the confines of an empire said to
 “ be as civilized as Rome, followed the Huns
 “ through Scythia, traversed with them Ger-
 “ many, scattering destruction in their way,
 “ and finally established themselves in our
 “ Aquitaine, between Poitiers and the sea.
 “ Even at a distance you can distinguish the
 “ deformed race of these Scythians of the
 “ east, a race which cannot be confounded
 “ with any of the inhabitants of Gaul : their
 “ head is of extraordinary size, their eyes di-
 “ minutive and hollow, their nose flat, and their
 “ almost beardless chin, decked with a few thin

* [TAIFALI, Gallicani, gens Scythica, puerorum stupris infamis, in agro Gallie Pictonico Sellensique, duce Ataulfo Gothorum rege aut ductu Goaris regis cum Alanis gente finitima, olim sedem fixit: *Teifali* Gregorio. Ab his Austrapius dux, apud Sellense castrum in Pictonibus episcopus ordinatus, interemptus est. Ex iisdem Senocus presbyter, clericus factus, in monasterio Turonico, multis virtutibus inclaruit, pauloque post Sigeberti regis cædem decessit. *Taifalia* vico nomen dedere, in finibus Pictonum, inter Clithionem et Moritaniam, ad Separin fluv. apud Namnetas in Ligerim exeuntem, hodie *Tifauge*.—*Vide Hoffman sub voce.*]

“sandy hairs. Their species seems more allied to the brute than to man. You know they never dwell in houses; all confinement they hold in horror; dividing their lives between the chase and their flocks, they value existence only as it affords them continual activity. As much strangers to pity as if they belonged not to our nature—insensible to any tender affections, they have polluted their marches with the most direful cruelties. Their manners are as disgusting as their mode of life is ferocious. From this race, however, hated by the rest of mankind, St. Senoch hath been called. He has not only renounced the pleasure of shedding blood, and the other crimes of his countrymen, but has also deprived himself of the freedom they hold so dear; he has sacrificed even the liberty enjoyed by the most miserable among the inhabitants of the earth; that liberty which the most severe rules have never denied the most rigid monks; that liberty, which even tyranny hath granted to the victims buried in her dungeons. He has chosen in the ruins of the tower of Loches, a space scarcely sufficient to hold his own body. There he has walled himself in a position which renders it impossible for him to sit, to lie, to stoop, or

“ touch any part of his frame with his hands.
“ Immured for ever in a case of stone, whence
“ he cannot escape, he remains motionless and
“ defenceless, in absolute dependence, not only
“ on the human beings, who, from charita-
“ ble motives bring him his food, which they
“ are obliged to put into his mouth ; but even
“ on the insect that lights on his face, and which
“ he cannot remove, or the reptile which creeps
“ between his body and the stone, or the rat
“ which at times attempts to gnaw his feet——”

At this instant the relation of father Andrew was interrupted by the cry—stop,—which suddenly was heard around them, proceeding from the middle of the forest. Felix turned his eyes towards Diocles to inquire what was meant by this shout. The veteran, without evincing the least alarm, coolly replied, in one word—the *bagaudæ* !

CHAP. VIII.

THE AMBUSH.

“ During this period a great number of travellers in Gaul became victims of the enraged banditti. These formed ambuscades on the largest and most frequented roads, and took off all who could pay a ransom. The tribune Constantianus, nearly related to the emperor Valentinian, and Cerealis, brother of the empress, fell into their snares.”

Ammiani Marcellini, lib. xxviii. cap. 2.

THE travellers were now within two leagues of the banks of the Indre. The country they were crossing was mountainous, covered with trees and brushwood, and intersected by streamlets, some of which flowed towards the Creuse, others towards the Indre. They were following, amid these wilds, a difficult and winding path, nearly destroyed by the autumnal rains. This path, at times, commanded an extensive view of the adjacent country; oftener, particularly on the slope of the hills, or in the neighbourhood of the rivers, it was dug deep, to diminish the de-

clivity of the soil, or to avoid its inequalities ; in these places the bottom was covered with slippery pebbles, like the dry bed of a torrent, while on the right and left arose perpendicular banks of earth, the edges of which were overhung with broom, brambles, and thorny shrubs.

In the vicinity of one of these small rivers, and on the slope of a hill, the travellers were stopped : behind them the declivity was covered with a forest of aged oaks ; in the bottom of the valley before them flowed a river at the distance of about six furlongs,—but which they were unable to see, being in a hollow of the road. In this place the path was not more than eight feet broad, and the two upright banks of sandy, sterile earth, rising on both sides, and covered with bushes, concealed every other object from their view, and enclosed them, as it were, between two lofty walls.

A tree, with all its branches, had been thrown by the *bagaudæ* into the hollow which the travellers were to pass : this was intended to stop them in the most advantageous position for attack. The outlaws, however, did not conceal themselves behind this rampart, but remained on the banks of the ravine, beyond the reach of blows. At times they shewed their menacing countenances above the bushes, as if to

reconnoitre the ground, immediately after which they hurled a volley of stones ; they were visible for a moment only, but made the forest ring with their threats, and the shouts of stop ! surrender !

This mode of attack proved that the *bagaudæ* lacked either arms or courage. It was impossible to approach them so as to fight hand to hand. They kept aloof, shewing themselves occasionally, and apparently more inclined to alarm than to injure. Among the heads which now and then peeped above the brushwood were seen as many women as men ; nay, in their threatening shouts, the voices of children could easily be distinguished. The *bagaudæ* appeared to be running on the banks, shouting now in the van, then in the rear of the travellers, wishing, seemingly, by these manœuvres to make their strength appear greater than it really was. They flung many stones without aim ; all which fell either before or behind the spot where the travellers stood, and no one had yet been wounded. They continued for several minutes in this threatening attitude, without coming to close combat.

The state of anarchy in which Gaul was now placed did not permit the Romans to travel unarmed, as was the custom of their ancestors.

Suspended to their saddles, Felix and Diocles had each a bow of the same form as that used by the Alani; they wore also a well-tempered Roman sword, with poniards in their girdles. The two slaves were armed with battleaxes, fastened to the burthens of their sumpter-mules. Andrew was the only one of the party who had no other arms than his staff.

After rapidly reconnoitring the obstacle which stopped them, and the strength and position of the assailants, Diocles exclaimed: "It were
"shameful cowardice to surrender to such
"rabble: forwards! let us instantly charge
"them."

The veteran grasped his bow; Felix did the same, intending to keep those at a distance, who, by their position commanded the path, while the slaves with their axes endeavoured to remove the tree.

"Stop," exclaimed father Andrew, "it shall
"not be said that for a few wretched pieces of
"gold, we snatch away the lives of our fellow-
"creatures, or that we ourselves rush headlong
"to the judgment-seat of God.—What do you
"ask of us?" said he to the bagaudæ, advancing alone and unarmed to the tree which barred their passage, at the same time making signs to his companions not to follow him.

A woman, removing with a battleaxe the brushwood which overhung the path, now advanced to the edge of the bank. Her stature was lofty, she appeared to be about fifty years of age: her dishevelled hair, hanging from beneath a cap of fur, her naked arms, her shoulders wrapt in an unshorn sheepskin, her short tunic, suited either for a man or a woman, gave to her a wild and terrific appearance; the harshness of her features, the commanding firmness of her voice, increased this first impression. "Surrender," said she to Andrew, "what needs any further parley?"

"Woman," replied the priest with firmness, "we will not surrender; we want neither the power nor the courage to defend our persons; but for a few paltry pieces of gold, I should wish to avoid shedding either the blood of thee or of ourselves. Say, what dost thou ask to leave the pass free to us?"

"We shall know how to defend ourselves," replied the female, "be thy blood on thy head if thou compel us to shed it. Again I say, surrender."

"Woman," resumed Andrew, "thou carriest on a trade hateful to God and to man; expose not thyself by provoking a combat, to be dragged sooner than thou wouldest wish be-

“fore the judgment-seat of the Highest, where
“thou wilt have to render an account of thy
“actions.”

“Priest,” replied the woman impatiently,
“keep thy sermons for other hearers, not for
“bagaudæ; go warn thy companions that all
“resistance is useless. Until now have I spared
“thy life, although, as thou seest, it is in my
“hands, for thy life must answer for that of my
“husband who was yesterday taken to the prison
“of Bourges. Judge now whether I can con-
“sent to receive a ransom: ’tis your bodies I
“want, not your gold—once more, I say, sur-
“render, for the patience of a bagauda is soon
“wearied.”

Father Andrew now returned to Felix and reported what had passed. “Julia Severa is a
“captive,” replied Felix, “perhaps groan-
“ing in a dungeon and awaiting her deliver-
“ance from me; never was liberty more ne-
“cessary—no—I will not surrender.”

At the same time Felix and Diocles strung their bows, and the arrows whistled over the head of the woman as she retired behind the brushwood. Holding themselves in readiness to shoot the first bagauda who might appear on either bank, they ordered the two slaves to advance with their hatchets, and to clear the pass.

At that moment the *bagaudæ*, uttering horrid yells, poured a shower of stones into the pathway. The slaves threw down their hatchets, and crouched to the earth: from that moment it was found impossible to make use of them. Father Andrew, leaping from his horse, seized one of the hatchets, and boldly advanced to the obstruction: Felix followed his example, and Diocles, meanwhile, with a skill and activity which could not have been equalled by his companions, shot his arrows among the brushwood with such precision, in the direction whence proceeded the stones, that a groan, following each discharge, made known that he had wounded some one of his unseen adversaries.

Father Andrew and Felix, in spite of a shower of stones, continued their endeavours to clear the pass. Their hatchets had already lopped off several of the large branches of the tree which lay athwart the road, and they began to see an opening by which the horses might clear the obstacle; when those animals, frightened by the yells, and struck by stones, began to snort and plunge, and became unmanageable. Diocles could with difficulty hold them as he continued fighting. The *bagaudæ*, seeing their prey on the point of escaping, advanced with less caution: being nearer to the travellers they flung

heavier stones, and took surer aim. One struck father Andrew on the right arm, and caused him to drop the hatchet: he said not a word, but stooping, picked it up with his left hand, with which he continued labouring, while the right arm hung powerless by his side. Another stone, still more heavy, struck Felix on the neck; as he was bending down to remove a branch which he had already severed; the blow stretched him senseless on the ground. The bagaudæ, now cheering each other with shouts of victory, united their efforts against Diocles, and hit him with several stones, hurled with such violence, that he dropt from his horse. The animal squeezed up in a narrow space, pressed by the horses of Felix and Andrew and the mules, terrified, wounded, and foaming with rage, rushed instantly, with the swiftness of an arrow, to the obstacle which was now partly removed: he cleared it at a leap; but at the same time threw down father Andrew, who, deprived of the use of his right arm, could not defend himself. The two other steeds also passed over him; but one of the mules, endeavouring to follow the horses, failed in the attempt to clear the tree, and fell back on the unfortunate priest.

All the travellers were now down, and the bagaudæ leaping from every side into the hol-

low, fell upon them in order to get possession of their arms, and to prevent their rising. Victory was no longer doubtful. Felix, who had not yet recovered his senses, was partly dragged, and partly carried, by two bagaudæ, who seized and bound him ere he was capable of resistance. Diocles, having received many contusions, was also overpowered and bound; but Andrew, whom the bagaudæ endeavoured to assist in rising from the ground, was incapable of motion. Not only had his arm been broken by a stone, but his thigh also was fractured by the fall of the mule laden with the baggage; his chest was dreadfully crushed, and a discharge of black blood from his mouth, as soon as he attempted to rise, proved that the organs of life were injured.

"This fellow," said a bagauda, who endeavoured to raise him, "has not more than two hours to live; we had better strip him at once, and let him die here in peace."

"Bear him out of the hollow," said the woman, who seemed to have some authority over the others, and whom her companions called Armentaria, "let nothing in this place draw the attention of passers by."

Two bagaudæ now took Andrew by his arms and legs, and carried him off with the pri-

soners; some seized the slaves and horses; while others picked up the arrows, and cautiously effaced all marks of the fight. The party then quitting the hollow a little lower down than the spot where the travellers were first stopped, plunged into the forest with their captives.

Felix was not aware of the state to which his travelling companion was reduced. When he came to his senses he found himself a prisoner in the forest, surrounded by men, some of whom held him closely, and threatened him with destruction. He advanced with downcast eyes, full of shame at having been conquered with such unequal arms, bewailing his fate, which, after a lapse of so few days, caused him to pass from one captivity to another, feeling the most bitter anguish at being deprived of liberty at the very moment when his activity was more than ever necessary to rescue Julia from the hands of her ravishers.

After advancing about five hundred paces, those who conducted Felix bade him stop. He raised his eyes and looked around. The hill, which the travellers were descending to reach the river when they were stopped, was very steep in this place. The bagaudæ had dragged him to a small terrace on the ascent from the river. Above, the naked rock, composed of

rolling stones, slightly united with sand, instead of forming a perpendicular cliff, presented a deep recess. The lower strata had yielded to the continued washing of the water and the ravages of time, while the upper remained untouched. Twenty or thirty men might easily find, under the shelving rock, shelter from the sun, rain, and wind. In the middle of the small terrace, on which they stood, arose two large wild cherry trees, beneath them grew abundance of brambles, clematis and hazels, which entirely concealed the road, and which, when seen from the opposite bank of the river, united their leaves to those of the bushes and shrubs which had taken root in the cliff above, and fringed the brow of the hill. Through the branches they could distinguish, and follow with the eye to a great distance, the course of the river, and the paths which encircled the neighbouring hills; these were in some parts seen ascending towards the summits of the mountains, in others they were concealed by the intervening woods. This position was well adapted for observation and retreat: the hill being more lofty than all others in the neighbourhood, the travellers, or the enemies who might approach, could be seen at the distance of twelve furlongs, while, at the same time, those who viewed them escaped ob-

ervation. The steepness of the rock rendered it absolutely impossible to descend to this spot from the top of the hill, or to ascend from the river which rolled its waters five hundred feet lower down. The only mode of reaching it was by a narrow pathway which winded around the steeps: this road was also stopped by a kind of breach, across which the bagaudæ had thrown a plank. As soon as all the captives and their conquerors had passed, the plank was drawn back, and the party remained inclosed in their fastness.

The whole of Felix's attention was now fixed on father Andrew. The bagaudæ who had carried him, stretched the unfortunate priest on a bed of moss, under the rocky shelf. He was motionless. His eyes were shut, his mouth open, the paleness of death was spread over his cheek and brow, his garments were spotted with gore, his arm and thigh were bent at the places of fracture. Felix thought him dead. Nevertheless he intreated the two men who held him fast to permit him to approach his travelling companion, and if not too late, to render him some assistance.

"Wish you to assist him against death?" roughly replied one of the two bagaudæ, "his sufferings are ended: think rather about yourself; your turn will soon come."

Felix now turned his eyes towards the man who thus spoke. He had been wounded by Diocles, and the blood flowing from his side explained the cause of his anger. His rough, wild features were rendered still more terrific by his raiment. His long dishevelled hair and ragged beard had for a long time known neither the comb nor the razor. His head was uncovered, his legs and the nether parts of his body were clothed in the national garment of the Gauls, the *braccae*, or breeches; but these were made with a coarse stuff, which appeared once to have served as the quilt of a bed; a sort of mantle of sheepskin hung from his shoulders, intended occasionally to cover his arms and his bosom, which by the least motion were rendered naked. In his hand he held a knotty club, to his girdle was fastened a large knife. He had no other weapons, and generally speaking all the party of *bagaudæ* into whose hands Felix had fallen, and which consisted of about fifteen men, as many women, and five or six children from ten to fifteen years old, were without any other arms than hatchets and knives.

Felix and Diocles were compelled to sit down: both had their hands tied behind their backs; they were made to lean one against the other, and by a cord passing round their bodies

they were fastened together. The bagaudæ took the precaution of securing the two slaves in the same manner, although the cowardice they had shewn during the combat had sufficiently proved that little was to be feared from them. They then began to heap up the plunder before Armentaria, the female who had first spoken to father Andrew, and who seemed to possess some power over her companions.

The baggage of the two mules was the first thing unpacked. One of those animals carried the clothes of Felix and Father Andrew, with a sort of travelling bed; the burthen of the other consisted of provisions and cooking utensils. This plunder excited the joy of the robbers. One wrapt himself in the toga of Felix, another in the cassock of father Andrew: a third, covering himself with a blanket, declared with an oath that it was high time the men of the woods should have better beds than those in the towns; that Felix would do well to send them all beds equally comfortable, and that he might in exchange, take to his gilded mansions the straw and moss with which they were obliged to be content in the forest. The women had already unloaded the mule which carried the kitchen utensils; they questioned the slaves respecting the use of those small articles which seemed well

adapted for their wandering mode of living, and for the completion of a kitchen they had formed in a corner of the rock. The wine-skin, borne by the same mule, passed from mouth to mouth; when drained of its contents, it was placed at the feet of Armentaria.

The bagaudæ next rummaged the pockets of the travellers, their joy was excessive when they pulled from that of Felix a purse well lined with gold. That of father Andrew was much lighter; nevertheless they opened it, and drew forth a shred of coarse stuff. "What is this rag?" said one of them, shewing it to Felix.

"That is a symbol given to us by our host at Iseurre: he recommended us to present it to the bagaudæ, should we meet with any on the road."

"What is the name of the host you are speaking of?"

"Nunnianus."

"Armentaria," said the bagauda to the female who headed the party, "this man had a token from your husband's brother."

Armentaria examined it carefully. "By my troth," said she, "it is a piece of his father's mantle; such tokens I have known Procer receive more than once. Traveller, why did you not show it sooner? You would have

“spared the shedding of much blood, and he
“who lies yonder on the moss would still have
“been alive.”

“You neither allowed us time for speaking
“to, nor coming near you.”

“All is well,” replied Armentaria, “what is
“was to be. Had my husband been free, he
“would have left you free also; but he is in
“shackles, I must have some pledge in order to
“recover him. Had you, instead of a token
“from Nunnianus, brought me one from the
“Almighty himself, I would have made you my
“prisoner.”

“In respect, at least, for the recommendation
“of Nunnianus, let me approach my unfortu-
“nate friend, to whom the token was given,
“and endeavour, if possible, to render him
“some assistance. Take away these bonds,
“and I will pledge myself by oath not to abuse
“your confidence by seeking to regain my li-
“berty.”

Armentaria took up from among the heap of
baggage before her, a book which she thought
must be the gospels, but which, in truth, was a
Horace, and presenting it to the two captives,
she made them swear they would not take advan-
tage of their freedom, and escape. After which
she made a sign to a baganda to loose them.

Diocles, who, until now, had been sullenly silent, as soon as he felt his hands free, maddened with rage, seized a stick lying by his side, broke it, and flung the pieces on the ground. He measured with his eyes the unarmed rabble which had conquered him; he beat his cheeks with his fists; at length making a violent effort to restrain his feelings, he resumed his wonted firmness and composure; he approached the corse of father Andrew, without having yet said one word. He examined him attentively; then, turning to Felix, said; "He still breathes."

CHAP. IX.

THE BAGAUDÆ.

“ Now will I speak of the bagaudæ; of those who have
“ been stript, tormented, put to death, by cruel and sanguinary judges; who, after having been deprived of their
“ rights as citizens of Rome, have lost the very name of
“ Romans.—We call them rebels, we call them ruffians,
“ when we ourselves were the cause of their becoming
“ criminals; for what forced them to turn bagaudæ? Was
“ it not our iniquities, the corruption of our magistrates,
“ their proscriptions, their rapacity, and the scandalous
“ seizure of the public revenues and the produce of the
“ imposts, which they took to themselves as their own?”

Salvianus de Gubernatione Dei, lib. v. p. 104.

FELIX sat by the side of father Andrew; he placed his head on his knees and rubbed his temples; having procured from Armentaria a small bottle of vinegar which formed part of his baggage, he made him smell to it, and also poured a few drops down his throat. The respiration of Andrew at length became less

difficult ; he opened his eyes and viewed with astonishment the wild countenances of the bagaudæ ; he then looked on Felix and Diocles, one of whom supported his head, while the other held his hands. He tried to move and to place his fractured arm and thigh in a less uneasy position, but not being able to do this, he again closed his eyes, and his brow was bathed in a cold and clammy perspiration.

His vain attempts to move attracted the attention of Felix and Diocles to his fractured limbs ; after examining them, after feeling his wounded breast and broken ribs, Diocles made a sign to Felix that all hope had vanished ; that all they could do for the unhappy patient was to leave him in that state of repose nature had granted to him, and not to increase or prolong his sufferings by the application of unavailing lenients.

Father Andrew now seemed again to revive : his lips moved as if attempting to speak. His words soon became intelligible, and Felix observed he was repeating the prayers for the dying : he then appeared anxious to receive the viaticum ; his wandering fingers seemed to be seeking for something. Unable to comprehend his meaning, they put various things into his hand, which he rejected. At length Felix gave

him a morsel of bread; Andrew broke it, and pronounced the words of consecration; after long and painful attempts, he carried it to his mouth and swallowed a small portion; his eyes remained shut. This last effort ended, his body once more became motionless; his breathing thickened, the rattling of death was heard in his throat: Diocles declared he was gone.

The eyes of Felix, filled with tears, remained fixed on father Andrew's face. After some time of anxious expectation, he thought he observed a change. The features of the dying man, until now distorted by pain, began to lose their rigidity; his jaws separated, his hollow cheeks resumed their former shape, his usual mildness beamed on his brow. At length his eyes opened, more clear, more calm than before.

"Felix, my son, art thou here?" said he, gently lifting up his head—then, recognising his friend, he continued: "my son, I have done thee a great injury; thou hast already told me that thou didst forgive me; do repeat the word once more, that I may carry with me to the grave the certainty of——"

"Yes, surely, with all my heart, with all my soul I forgive you! When you injured me you were in error; in the fulness of your

“ judgment and feeling you were endeavouring
“ to do me good.”

“ Thou dost then forgive me ! Heaven grant
“ that the poor, unhappy lady, the victim of my
“ folly, may also pardon me !—In my turn also,
“ I have forgiven, I now again forgive the only
“ enemy I ever had, the man who stole from me
“ the peace of a good conscience. I forgive Vo-
“ lusianus, do thou, my son, forgive him also.”

Felix was silent.

“ Do, I beseech thee, forgive him, my son.
“ Now thou art in sufferance thy forgiveness
“ will be more acceptable to the Almighty, more
“ worthy of the Christian.”

“ I do forgive him.”

“ Wilt thou labour to restore liberty to thy
“ betrothed, but not to punish him who hath
“ wrested her from thee : wilt thou, my son,
“ ever respect the honour of the prelate, the
“ honour of the church, although thou mayst
“ oppose the abuse of power in the former ?—
“ When Julia shall be restored to her father, to
“ herself—for she will be so—let thy first thought
“ be to make her truly and indeed a Christian,
“ to make her prove that she is a Christian; by
“ forgiving her persecutor.”

“ I will—I will.”

“ As for these poor people, urged by misery

“to commit crime, they felt no hatred against me, they did not wish to hurt me; neither have they hurt me; for they at least, have not caused me to feel remorse; to forgive them is not difficult. Stand by, good people,” said he to the bagaudæ, “know that father Andrew forgives you his death.”

Armentaria approached, accompanied by a few bagaudæ, with countenances expressive of curiosity mingled with interest.

“My children,” said he, raising his voice, “I forgive you, may you also obtain pardon in heaven. May this act of violence, and those you have before committed, be for ever cancelled. Should the Almighty, filling the cup of mercy to the brim, vouchsafe to move your hearts—could the voice of a dying man reclaim you from the fatal path on which you are now treading, I would—I would promise you, in the name of the senator Félix Florentius; in the name of count Julius Severus——”

This exertion was too great for the sinking strength of Andrew, his ideas now began to be confused, his words were without connection, and no longer heard distinctly, his head sunk back on the moss-bed, his eyes closed again: still he spoke, or rather murmured. His lips continued to move, sometimes accompanied with

a slight sound: at length that motion ceased, the cold of death had seized his extremities, his limbs stiffened,—he was no more.

Felix had watched the last moments of his friend, his attention had been fixed on all his words and all his gestures, hoping to give him some relief: busied in this friendly office, since the first moment of their captivity, he had lived, as it were, for the present only; his thoughts strayed neither to the past nor the future; as long, therefore, as Andrew breathed, he remained unconscious of the horror of his situation; but as soon as he had heard his last groan, the most melancholy ideas rushed before his mind. Julia was a prisoner, concealed from all his researches; he who possessed the secret of her existence, he from whom alone he could expect the means of restoring her to freedom, was snatched away by death; he himself was a prisoner among robbers, unable to see any probable end of his captivity, while his friend and mother were anxiously expecting his return—a mother who had suffered so much during his first absence, a friend whose only hopes centred in him. His heart was not even free from remorse; he reproached himself with having accepted a challenge he was unable to sustain, and thus caused the death of father Andrew; he pon-

dered in his mind the affecting exhortations of the honest priest, the proofs he had given of patience, of courage, of kindness; and while his eyes remained fixed on the corse, tears trickled silently down his cheeks.

The bagaudæ for some time refrained from interrupting his grief. The dying agonies of father Andrew had lasted several hours, after which Felix stood long in silence, with folded hands, by the side of his departed friend. Meanwhile several of the robbers went out from the camp, and returned, sometimes bringing provisions, at others giving information to Armentaria. The day began to fall, and the bagaudæ gathering round a large fire, prepared their supper. A sheep had been brought by one of the party; the animal was instantly skinned and divided, some parts being thrown into their caldrons, others hung before the fire to roast; at the same time some round stones were thrown among the embers and made red hot, and then taken from the fire and covered with half dry chesnut leaves, over which they spread a liquid paste. They next formed a pile of these heated stones, and alternate layers of dough. This sort of oven served to bake their unleavened cakes, on which, when dressed, were still seen the marks of the leaves.

Their repast was nearly ready when Armen-

approached Felix: "You have given to dead the attention which his state demanded," said she to him, "think now of his al before you sit at the board of the ig. It behoves not bagaudæ long to remain one place, while so many blood-hounds seeking to tear them in pieces. We shall before depart at midnight, and we do not end that this corse should remain to bear ness against us. Go—lay it in the earth the river side."

Felix regretted that he could not perform his friend the service for the dead, according to the rites of the church. He started some objections: but Armentaria's countenance, which assumed a certain mildness when she addressed him, returned to its accustomed harshness. She impatiently replied by the single word "begone."

"We are prisoners," said Diocles, "our part is to obey." At the same time he called two slaves, who raised the body of father Andrew in their arms; he then said he was ready to follow the bagaudæ wherever they chose to conduct him. They took a rugged path, leading to the river, and penetrated amid the thicket to the bed of a mountain stream, now dry, where the sand and alluvion were

easily removed: with the assistance of the slaves, the bagaudæ opened a shallow grave, in which Felix and Diocles deposited their friend; and with tears in their eyes, bidding him a last farewell, they returned to the camp, where all was in readiness for the supper.

“Felix Florentius,” said Armentaria to him when he returned, “your slaves have informed me of your name and rank: I see I was not mistaken when I imagined that the restoration of my husband might depend on you. You must remain with us as a hostage until he be set at liberty. In our miserable situation we cannot feed useless mouths, nor keep many prisoners. I deplore the death of him who rests yonder in his grave: were he still with us I would give him his freedom, out of respect for the recommendation of Nunnianus, who has often assisted us in our distress. But the will of him whom the priest served, is more powerful than ours—of him, therefore, no more. Let this soldier,” said she, pointing to Diocles, “depart for Bourges; let him tell the count of that town that unless within five days my husband, Procer Nunnianus, be again among us, I will cut your body into four quarters, and cast your head at his gate. If you have any zealous friends, send your two

res to them, so that they may endeavour save you. I desire as much as yourself may succeed; but if they fail, by the living God who now hears us, Armentaria will execute her threat. Come now and sup with us, you have need to refresh your strength, for you will have a long march to make."

Be not surprised," replied Felix, "if the mournful duties I have just fulfilled towards my friend, and the fate with which you threaten me, have taken away the desire of sharing your repast."

"We can eat, though," replied a bagauda, "yet to-morrow, perhaps, we shall all be cast before the wild beasts, or tortured on the scaffold."

"I will also eat," said Felix, "and bear my fate, whatever it may be, as a man and a Roman; but since my life depends on that of your husband, and you allow him so short a time to meet you, you should appoint a place of rendezvous; you are about to depart without informing Diocles of the direction in which you are going to march."

"Surely you do not wish that I should tell the count of Bourges where he may come and slaughter us. It is sufficient for him to know that we shall approach towards your estate.

dustry, was as insupportable as the slavery of the fiscalin peasants.

“All,” she said, “were equally exposed to outrage, to hunger, to punishment. This one,” she continued, pointing out one of her companions to Felix, “after his house had been burnt to the ground by the Burgundians, his cattle slaughtered, his crops scattered before the wind, was condemned to receive, each day, fifty stripes, until his annual rent was paid. He, standing yonder, was driven from his cottage by a party of Roman soldiers, in the midst of winter, and saw his wife, in the pangs of child-birth, perish in the woods, stretched upon a bed of ice and snow. This one near me lost two children, who died of hunger in the year when the most abundant of harvests had just filled his granaries; but his all was seized to pay the debts of the landlord whose farm he cultivated. Many among my companions still bear on their bodies the marks of punishment which they did not deserve; all, not excepting one, all would have preferred to drag out their existence amid troubles and sufferings, on the land which witnessed their birth, rather than lead the miserable life to which we are now reduced, had not

elming oppression driven them to the east. We have been exposed to two centuries of war, but neither the sword of the soldier and barbarian, nor the axe of the executioner, nor hunger that pursueth us even to our fastnesses, hath been able to lessen our numbers. Thousands of us yearly perish on our scaffolds, but yearly do thousands of fugitives from your estates join our band: nay, all the population of Gaul may, in the end, perish in our forests."

The other guests took little or no share in the conversation: a circumstance which might properly be attributed to their mode of eating, which compelled them to separate into small groups. They were all sitting or lying under a rocky shelf, the food being spread on the ground between them; they appeared busied rather in satisfying the cravings of hunger, than gratifying the pleasures of the palate. In some of these groups were seen women and children eating as though they had long felt the want of nourishment; and the suspicion excited by their voraciousness was confirmed by their illid meagreness. The meal with which they made their cakes constituted a part of their scanty provisions; the sheep had been seized, or, perhaps, received as a present from some

shepherd, a short time before Felix fell into the hands of the banditti. The wine-skin which was among his baggage, had been instantly emptied, and, during the supper, water was their only beverage; when, therefore, it was ended, they were neither more animated nor more heated than before they began. When they arose, they took care to destroy all traces of their meal and their encampment. They threw all that was useless down the cliff beneath them, and concealed in an excavation under the rock, which they afterwards covered with earth and dried leaves, all that might serve them another time, but which now would have encumbered their march. This was not done until the slaves and Diocles, who were shewn the shortest way to Tours and to Bourges, had departed and left their master alone amid the bagaudæ. Felix saw, with regret, the greatest part of his own luggage stowed in the hiding place.

The remnants of the fire disappeared, nothing now marked that men had been on the spot they were leaving.

“Let us begone,” said Armentaria, “Felix Florentius, it is as well you should bear in mind that these two men are to answer for your security; one will march before, the

er behind you ; I have given orders to both plunge their knives into your breast should you remove one step from the path, or attempt to give an alarm. Silence, therefore, I march !”

This injunction was strictly observed during the whole journey. The horses and mules of the party had not been brought to the terrace where they had passed the greater part of the day : he knew them no more, and consequently guessed that some of the robbers had undertaken to sell their horses at a distant mart. All the bagaudes marched in file, at a distance of fifteen or twenty paces from each other, saving the two who guarded Felix and never lost sight of him. As they were mostly unshod, or wore sandals of untanned hides, they made no noise when walking. The seizure of their leader two days before, and the troops who they knew were scouring the country to discover them, obliged them to act with double caution. They entered no highway, but followed sometimes a path, the direction of which could with difficulty be traced, at others they advanced through the more open parts of the forest. They frequently passed houses near enough to see the lights and hear the barkings of the watch-dogs ; they often stopped while the leader of the file listened,

although they still observed their usual silence ; as soon as the leader advanced they followed. The night was nearly spent ; but the moon illumined the country, and although on her decline, gave sufficient light to distinguish neighbouring objects with accuracy. Their march was long, being delayed by the precautions and frequent stoppages of the travellers ; Felix at length saw before him a lofty ruinous tower, at the top of which glimmered a small light. Not far distant stood a considerable hamlet extending from the tower to the banks of a wide river. This was the end of their journey, and the bagaudæ, who until now had walked at a distance from each other, closed their ranks under the shade of the tower.

To reach the back of this tower they were obliged to pass a small platform on which the moon shone in all her brightness. They had just crossed it in file, as they had performed the former part of their journey, but as often as one of them rushed rapidly over the dangerous spot, he heard the tinkling of a bell, and the unconnected words of a prayer against evil spirits, proceeding from the place where the light was seen.

“ Father Senoch is still on the watch,” said one of the bagaudæ to his companion, in a

vice, "and thinks that with his little he shall send us all to old nick, for he is us for his imps. Well, well, we are indebted to his fears for our safety. If he didn't see people believe we were evil spirits, there would be no living here for us."

"What's he at up aloft there?" said another lady, who was less acquainted with the story.

"Why, for the last five years he has stuck himself on the top of that tower like a sun-dial, peeping his head out of the wall just below the lamp, which the good old ladies of Loches light every day, at the same time they make him something to eat, for you must know he can do nothing with his hands but just ringing that bell."

Felix was convinced by this conversation, that he was now standing before the hermitage of the holy saint for whom father Andrew had shewn much veneration, but who, in piety and good sense, appeared much inferior to the friend he had lost. He saw, also, with some surprise, that the bagaudæ had brought him

to the very spot he had intended to visit. This was the tower of Loches, where Andrew suspected Julia was imprisoned, the walls of which he himself, a captive as well as his mis-

train, was now compelled to pass, without any means of confirming this conjecture or giving her any assistance.

The bagaudæ now hastened to cross the Indre and quit Loches, where was stationed a small party of soldiers in pursuit of them. Some went down into the subterraneous vaults over which the tower was erected. "Well, father " Senoch has taken good care of our boat," said they when they returned. "The devils which the " good old man always sees around him are the " safeguards of the bagaudæ; nobody ever dares " enter these caverns; so that what we left here " a fortnight ago has not been touched."

They then dragged from the tower a small boat made of wicker work, and so light that a man could easily carry it on his shoulder for several hours without feeling fatigue: they had stowed in it some hides of oxen sewed together, smeared with pitch, and sufficiently large to cover the little vessel so as to admit no water; they carried the boat, with its lining of skin, to the bank of the Indre, where, after having properly rigged it, they set it afloat. They now trusted themselves successively in small parties aboard this slight wherry, and thus all crossed the river.

CHAP. X.

THE NUNNERY.

queen Theodochilde was preparing to quit the convent, but the abbess foresaw her intention, and ordering her to be severely scourged, shut her up in a dungeon, where till the end of her life she was exposed to the most sufferings."—*Greg. Tur. lib. iv. cap. 26. p. 216.*

As soon as Julia Severa quitted Felix the gates of the nunnery closed behind her, she found herself a prisoner in a dark, narrow, damp hall, where she was ordered to remain. A death-like chill now pervaded her soul: severed from all she loved on earth, delivered into the powerful hands of people whom she could regard as enemies only, no protection was left to whom she could resort: she could have no communication with no living soul, who was not her persecutor; there remained no hope at any of those who felt concern in her welfare could ever discover the place of her seclusion. She sat down on the bottom steps of a staircase,

and covering her eyes with her hands, and leaning on her knees, she remained two long hours absorbed in sorrowful meditation, during which not one of the inmates of the nunnery approached her.

Nor were these feelings of grief relieved when the lady abbess, accompanied by another nun, approached her. Pride, severity, and mistrust were written on the brow of the former. Descended from an illustrious family of Gaul, and connected with Volusianus by the ties of blood, she ruled the interior of the convent with a power as despotic as the emperor wielded the sceptre of Byzantium: all resistance to her will she regarded as a heinous violation of laws both divine and human: she believed in her own sanctitude, and in the infallibility of her judgment; this tended to render her tyranny much more galling, for in exercising it over her nuns she thought she did no more than her duty.

“ Daughter of Severus,” said she to Julia, “ the commands of the archbishop of Tours
“ have withdrawn you from the world, and con-
“ demned you to await within these walls, that
“ light from on high, which haply may convert
“ you, should not the vengeance of the jealous
“ God, who hath already pulled down the pride

“ of the idolater, crush you also. This convent,
“ which until now was inhabited only by holy
“ virgins, we have therefore been compelled to
“ open unto you in spite of the repugnancy we
“ feel in admitting you in your present unholy
“ and sinful condition. Look you—if you choose
“ to renounce Satan and all his vanities, if, from
“ the bottom of your heart you will confess that
“ faith which now plays only on your lips, then
“ may you give us a convincing proof of your
“ conversion—binding yourself by irrevocable
“ vows to our holy rules: in that case, we
“ ourselves shall not refuse to forget and for-
“ give; we will receive you as an obedient
“ daughter.”

“ From no one on earth,” replied Julia, rising with a proud feeling of dignity, “ from no one
“ on earth have I to crave forgiveness or obli-
“ vion of my crimes; no one had the right to
“ exercise over me that violence which has
“ brought me to this spot. Dragged hither by
“ force, I wonder that any one should tell me I
“ am admitted with repugnancy.”

“ Severa, pride beseemeth you not in our
“ presence,” said the abbess, “ you are not now
“ standing amid the grovelling adulators of an
“ idolatrous senator: you stand before a wo-
“ man, who, from God and the apostolical suc-

“cessor of St. Martin, holds absolute power
“over your liberty, nay, over your life.”

“Were I treated in a manner less indignant,”
replied Julia, “I should feel less pride. What
“want you from me?”

“Will you solemnly abjure your errors? Will
“you bind yourself by eternal vows to follow
“our order?”

“Shew me the errors of my belief—then will
“I abjure them, not before. I have no means
“of resisting, I must therefore bow before my
“fate, but never will I sanction my captivity by
“taking the vows.”

“Marvel not then if you are excluded the
“society of the holy virgins, whose roof hence-
“forth shall shelter you—Let the idolatress
“remain alone, in the company of her evil
“thoughts.” said the abbess, turning towards
her religious attendant. She continued—“Let
“the sisters beware of approaching her. Let
“an apartment be prepared for her at the ex-
“tremity of the right-hand cloister. It must
“not be said, that a woman, who, perhaps, still
“communes with Satan, dwells near any of the
“virgins consecrated to the Almighty.—Go,
“sister Mary, provide for her wants, take care
“her raiment be modest, and her food frugal.
“Let her await in silence our orders.”

The lady abbess, eyeing Julia with a look of disdain, said no more, but departed.

Sister Mary followed the abbess with her eyes for some time, wishing, as it were, to be certain that she should not be seen to infringe the command of silence she had just received: she then cast on Julia a look of compassion, blended with curiosity. "Poor girl," said she, "how could you summon courage to speak to our lady abbess with so much haughtiness? I vow my whole frame quaked when I heard you thus irritate her highness."

"I did no more than repel a wilful insult," replied Julia, "but I thought not of offending her, still less did I think I was to fear her."

"Alas! she whose apartment you are going to inhabit, learnt by woful experience how dangerous it is to answer the lady abbess with arrogance. The life of poor sister Anna paid for her error; and yet she was not like you, bound with the shackles of the world; she was one of our order, she had already taken her vows."

"Did the lady abbess then put her to death?"

"God forbid; the anointed of the Lord never shed human blood; such an abomination hath never been committed within our holy walls; but the lady abbess of St. Mary of the Casket

“ is like our prelate, she has the same rights
“ and the same privileges; her jurisdiction is
“ absolute over all the inmates of the convent.
“ Her highness, our lady abbess, only ordered
“ sister Anna to be shut up by the side of the
“ drain in the black dungeon, which we call the
“ *dimittis in pace*; those who are put there
“ never live above three weeks. But let us
“ go to your chamber, where you will find the
“ clothes of poor sister Anna, they may be of
“ some use to you now.”

Julia Severa, with downcast eyes, followed the nun appointed to conduct her to her room. Her courageous soul, accustomed to brave all dangers, was now assailed with new terrors, and sunk beneath the repeated attacks to which she had been exposed since her visit to the castle of Rutilianus. Her road through the convent was of considerable length; she was conducted to the third story, and as the flights of stairs were not above each other, she was obliged to pass all the galleries of the lower stories. The corridor, at the bottom of which stood her room, was not like the others, surrounded by cells: the store-rooms of the convent, the piles of firewood, and the large open but dark spaces under the joists of the roof, shewed that this part of the edifice was not inhabited. On their way,

Julia, in her turn, put some questions to the nun.

“ You were speaking about the prisoners in
“ the black cell; you said they never lived more
“ than three weeks. Pray have you known
“ many sent to that place?”

“ No, I cannot say I have known many; for
“ all the time I have lived in this convent I
“ really think I have not seen more than five.
“ Now I consider it you will not be sent there,
“ for you are not one of our order: the *dimittis*
“ *in pace*, after all, is a cell, and you are not a
“ nun: it even is said you are not a Christian.”

Julia felt no very great desire of claiming this singular privilege of Christianity and the religious order. “ What had sister Anna done to excite the resentment of the lady abbess?” said she.

“ It would be a long, long tale to tell,” replied Mary, “ besides it is one of the secrets of our order, and it is our duty to believe she deserved her punishment. Be that as it may, I would not for a great deal inhabit the apartment in which she suffered so much, poor girl. Here—we are arrived.”

At the same time she untied from her girdle a bunch of keys, and opened the solitary door at the extremity of the gallery. The room was

much larger than the cells of the nuns: it was tolerably well lighted by two windows protected by strong iron gratings, but the prospect extended no further than one of the inner courts. At one extremity a few rough planks supported a straw mattress and a coverlid. By its side was an *amphora*, or jug, a deal bench stood before the windows, and an open chest completed the furniture. Near the chest were seen a few articles of female attire, that had formerly belonged to the unfortunate sister Anna. A prayer-book lay on the ground; two other books, both open, were seen lying, one on the bench, the other on the bolster of the bed, they were the *Elegies of Propertius*, and the *Heroides of Ovid*. The titles of these two books, to which sister Mary paid no attention, furnished Julia with the means of conjecturing the secret cause of sister Anna's misfortune.

"This is your chamber," said Mary, "you will have time enough to be acquainted with it, for you wont be suffered to leave it very soon. The dinner hour is at noon, but it is not likely our lady abbess will permit you to enter the refectory. Your dinner, therefore, will be sent to your room. I would advise you to seize that opportunity, and ask all you may want, for at no other time will you hear the

l of a human voice." The nun then the room, and locked the door. eling of dignity had hitherto supported but she was now no longer called upon ; she was hidden from all observation ; no had she her rank to support. She cast yes around her ; the tears trickled down eeks. "Felix, Felix," said she, "art thou n so near to me, and yet so distant? Canst u now defend me?" She approached the ows with a faint hope that she might at see the monastery in which Felix was imed ; but she soon discovered they did not mand a view of the quadrangle by which entered.

ndeavouring to dissipate the melancholy ughts and dire forebodings which swelled bosom, she sought to direct her imagina- towards the unfortunate woman who had ore occupied the same apartment ; thus she cied she might drive from her mind the con- nplation of her own fate. She carefully rched the traces left by her, who, in this me spot, had undergone so many sufferings. he articles of furniture were so few that she ad soon looked over them. The wainscot at- acted her attention for a longer time. In ore than one place she observed joints in

the pannels, which led her to suspect that the door was not the only entrance to her apartment. This caused her at first to feel something like alarm; after a little reflection it struck her that even should there be any secret inlets, they were carefully closed against her, since it was intended to render her escape impossible, while those on whom she depended were masters of the principal door, by which, at all hours, they could gain access without her permission; she also saw that in this house, guarded with so much caution, she had to fear no visits but those of the abbess and her agents.

She next attentively examined the different inscriptions which covered the wainscot. It appeared that Anna had been urged by a rebellious feeling to oppose the rules to which she had subjected herself. Far from burying in the bottom of her heart passions forbidden by those rules, she had apparently sought to confide to the walls what she could not sound in the ears of man; to supply by inscriptions the want she felt of a confidant, and thus to gratify the desire of disclosing the feelings of her heart. Most of these inscriptions were borrowed from the best poets of Greece and Rome. They consisted of brief quotations, verses probably applicable to

a situation; but all expressed despair, of slavery, disappointment, or love. After them, Julia fancied she might conquer unhappy predecessor had been invariably immured in the cloister, in order to form a union which her family would not sanction; in solitude her love had become a violent passion, which, perhaps, had disordered her intellects, or, at any rate, had inspired her with aversion against the abbess, the whole, even the religion there professed—another monument, the monuments of which she had not time to leave behind her.

Julia seated herself on the bed, which formerly had often been watered with the tears of Anna. Her imagination endeavoured to unravel the tale of woe, the proofs of which surrounded her; thus she fancied she might forget her own grief. But when her imagination turned to sister Anna, it was to paint her with Anna's feelings, Julia's fears, Julia's sorrows: the deep affections which she supposed might exist in the unknown heroine of her fancy, incessantly brought her ideas back to her own situation; then again the dread she felt respecting her own fate, recalled to her mind sister Anna, and her mournful death.

For the last four and twenty hours Julia had

not undressed: she now resolved on paying some attention to her attire, hoping thereby in some measure to divert her melancholy thoughts in the midst of the inactivity to which she was condemned. The amphora was still half full of water—that water had been brought for sister Anna; she was obliged to take from the chest of the unfortunate nun the linen and garments she wished to change. Thus inheriting the property of the unknown lady, she shuddered; it seemed as if she was following her steps, doomed soon to perish in the same manner.

Time hung heavily: so many are the mournful thoughts, the fears, the regrets, which, in a short period, can succeed each other, tearing the soul with cruel asperity, when the straying of the mind is not slackened by conversation! Judging from her feelings, from her sufferings, Julia thought she must have passed at least four and twenty hours in the convent, when she heard the sound of steps in the passage. It was mid-day, and sister Mary, the same who had conducted her to the chamber, now brought her dinner.

“Well, as I said, the lady abbess does not choose you should come to the dining hall,” said Mary; “she will not allow you to speak to any of the sisters; she permits no one to see

ve myself; and even me she has ordered silent in your presence, and not so much answer your questions; for, says she, the of one single servant of the devil is more enough to corrupt our whole convent. You I surely tell us some very strange tales; : joys of the world—from which good I deliver us—must needs be very attractive very seducing, since we can not even : them mentioned without infringing our laws; but I am not young, and, besides, hope is in God; I don't fear any thing. ask, my dear, you may say all you have to r."

I am at a loss," said Julia, "to know why our lady abbess has such a dread of my conversation; but I assure you I have no desire to corrupt your companions, and that my dislike of hearing or saying things unfit for religious ears, is at least equal to that of the abbess herself."

"It is said, however, you are an idolatress, or at least the daughter of an idolater," said Mary, "I suppose, therefore, you worship the devils. For our part, guided by the light from on high, we see them in their real shapes: they are black, haggard, and terrific; they

“ have horns on their heads, a cloven hoof, and
“ long tails. Heaven preserve us from their
“ abominable embraces ; but to you, I dare say,
“ they appear in another form. I remember
“ when I was still of the world, I saw some
“ statues of Mars and Apollo, which might
“ have delighted the eye. They are all devils,
“ my dear ; to those who see them in their
“ true shape, they are as hideous as the one
“ St. Michael overthrew ; but do tell me how
“ they appear to you ? ”

“ I assure you I have never seen them under
“ any form : I am no idolatress—I am a Chris-
“ tian like yourself.”

“ A Christian like myself ! At any rate, if
“ you are a Christian, you are a Christian of the
“ world ; of that abominable world, that ocean
“ of stormy vice, seducing pleasure, and crimi-
“ nal luxury, from which we have happily
“ escaped by taking refuge in this holy house,
“ as in a secure port. Tell me what are the
“ pleasures you regret the most ? ”

“ I regret the loss of my father’s society, of
“ my friend’s, more than all of my liberty.”

“ Surely you had a lover ; why don’t you say
“ you bewail the loss of your lover ? We are
“ told that of all the seductions to which the

resorts to ruin us, love is the most powerful. Do tell me about your love adventures."

"Our imagination," said Julia, smiling, "unlike realities, I assure you, much more rapidly creates realities do in the world. I have nothing to tell you."

After Mary would not have given up the time so soon, had she not heard the hall bell ring; she had not a moment to lose. She called her sister, who was in attendance, without the door, and ordered her to perform some trivial duties for Julia, while she was present. She then informed the captive that the provisions she had brought must serve her the whole day, that she would see no one until the following morning; after which she quitted the apartment with the lay sister, and again locked the door.

CHAP. XI.

NOCTURNAL VISITS.

“ Under the cathedral was a very ancient and very secret cavern, containing a large tomb of Parian marble, in which the body of some great personage had been buried. The bishop ordered the priest to be shut up alive in the sepulchre with the corse; this was accordingly executed, and the cover of the tomb was placed over him, guards being posted at the entrance.”

Greg. Tur. lib. iv. cap. 12, p. 208.

THE prattling impertinent curiosity of sister Mary did not inspire Julia Severa with any very great desire to make her a confidant. Nevertheless, when she heard the door close upon her, she began to regret having given such ungracious and abrupt answers to her many questions; particularly when she recollected that condemned as she was to solitary confinement, Mary was the only living creature whose voice she was permitted to hear; she was the only

by whose means she could form any of corresponding with those beyond the walls; by whose means she might renew concerning Gaul, the Frank king, her father; by whose means, perhaps, she even be enabled to send information to concerning herself. This short conversation, moreover, had caused Julia to feel the ties of human society. The ridiculous question of sister Mary had served to divert her; her mind was now more calm; her situation certainly appeared fraught with sorrow and some monotony; but she no longer had the feelings of terror. Her prospects had not become brighter, yet she had spoken, she had opened, nay a smile had crossed her lips: she determined, as soon as Mary should return, to give some food to her curiosity, by relating her adventure; thus she resolved to excite, if possible, an interest in the bosom of the nun, by which she might afterwards profit, and induce her to reply to the questions she might put in her turn.

Still had she to fill up her many hours of solitude—solitude, which of all torments is the most cruel to an active mind. She had also to keep a command over the faculties of her soul and to preserve the strength of her mind; this

Julia felt to be due to her own dignity, to her father's rank, and to Felix. She felt, also, that the troubles and agitation in which she had passed the whole of the morning, had wearied her mind, and might, if continued, affect her intellects. She saw, therefore, the necessity of finding some object of occupation for each hour of the day, in order to stop the wanderings of imagination; she likewise found it indispensable to regulate the train of her ideas, that they might not lead her to a state of melancholy despondence. This task she courageously undertook. Prodigal of time, the weight of which now crushed her, she consecrated some hours to her toilet, others to her solitary meals, others, lastly, to her devotions, much more than under the paternal roof she was wont to dedicate to these occupations. Not without reluctance did she resort to the erotic poets left by sister Anna. Some of the elegies of Propertius she admired; over some of the heroides of Ovid she could shed tears of sensibility; but neither of these poets was suited to her taste. The articles left by sister Anna furnished her with another source of amusement: among them she found tableta and a style; with these she was enabled to write, and thus she resolved to pass some hours daily, recording all the remarkable phrases and

observations Felix's conversation had engrained on her memory. Yet she wished not to waste this resource, for she felt how painfully would be her days and hours, now that no range of objects could take place around her. In one corner of the room she found a leaden pipe, a portion of which might serve her as a stylus. With this rough instrument she endeavored to trace on two of the whitened panels, the portrait of Felix and one of the landscapes seen from Noviliacum.

This last occupation beguiled her time, and gave to her thoughts a gentle tranquillity; it promised her a long employment, for the lead which she had rubbed on the hearth stone to form a pencil, was only fit to make the sketch; she resolved to ask sister Mary for some better instruments, and should they be refused, to use stick or charcoal. Thus busied, the afternoon glided more rapidly than the morning, and when the fall of day compelled her to give up her amusement, for both fire and light were denied her, she ate of the remnant of her dinner, and then laid her down, with that tranquillity of soul, which a pure conscience, united to a strong mind, insures to man in all situations.

The autumnal equinox was passed; the nights were long, and after twelve o'clock, in

spite of her preceding fatigues, Julia was no longer buried in deep sleep. A slight noise awoke her: she opened her eyes. The secret entrance she suspected to exist in the wainscot, was unclosed; a woman came into the room holding a lamp. Her tunic was white, a white veil covered her head: but it was raised, and permitted her wan and meagre face to be seen, which bespoke her years to be about thirty: she had probably once been handsome, but had, doubtless, suffered much. Her countenance bore the marks of sorrow and harshness, mingled with somewhat of craft. She walked slowly, and her steps were unheard. After casting one look on the bed of Julia, she attended no more to the captive; but examined the various objects which had undergone any change in the apartment; she looked at the sketches Julia had made on the wall, at the words she had traced on the tablets, at the articles which belonged to sister Anna, and those Julia had been obliged to borrow from her predecessor.

Julia remained in bed, her eyes fixed on the apparition. She was in doubt whether it was one of the inmates of the convent, or some superhuman being that stood before her. The stately motions of the white lady, her noiseless actions, the extraordinary curiosity she seemed

re concerning all that had belonged to Anna, at length excited in Julia's mind suspicion that she was either that nun or made. Her eyes had more than once met of the phantom, Julia, therefore, was certain that although the white lady did not notice she must be conscious she was not asleep; less of that circumstance, she continued to mine every thing with a prying eye, expressed of curiosity only.

Julia's emotion rapidly augmented. She felt her heart throb with violence; yet concentrating her strength, and wishing to clear up a doubt which now seemed to bewilder her faculties; anxious to ascertain whether she herself was really awake, she raised her voice and exclaimed, "Sister Anna."—Placing her forefinger on her lips, the white lady looked on Julia, and disappeared by the secret entrance, which instantly closed.

Julia, who had raised herself in the bed, now sunk back in a cold perspiration. Few women possessed more firmness of character, or an understanding more enlightened: few women were less subject to superstitious fears, or to belief in supernatural agency: but for the last few days, her life had been racked by so

many cruel storms, she had been the sport of so many extraordinary events, some of which were still unexplained; her vision at the castle of Rutilianus had in her mind so completely destroyed the limits of possibility and probability, that reason had lost its support, and she no longer knew on what foundation to rest her judgment.

Now again all was dark and silent, Julia's heart palpitated with a violence threatening to stifle her respiration; she fixed her eyes on the dark void, and wearied her nerves by looking on nothing. Her ears listened for the slightest sound, but they heard nought save the distant crackling of the wainscot, the buzz of an insect, or the faint ticking of the deathwatch. These noises caused her to start; then again she heard nothing, and endeavoured to persuade herself that what she had heard was nothing.

Endeavouring as it were to dispel the terrors which pervaded her mind, she sometimes closed her eyes, thinking she still waked, although the anxiety of her wearied mind threw her into a sort of feverish dream, during which her fears assumed new forms, but were not for one moment tranquillized. In this dreaming state of stupor, she passed more than two hours, when opening her eyes she again saw the white lady, who

now seated on the bed, the lamp being placed
near Anna's box.

Julia looked on her a few moments in silence;
the white lady fixed her eyes on the captive,
and spoke not. At length, summoning all her resolu-
tion, she ventured to say; "Who are you?"
An unfortunate woman—like yourself a pri-
soner; like yourself persecuted."

"What do you ask of me?"

"Compassion, counsel, perhaps protection."

"Oppressed and reduced as I now am," re-
plied Julia, whose terrors had been dissipated
by these answers, "I am far from having the
power, either to protect or to comfort any
other person in distress. Compassion is all I
have to offer, that you may be assured of
meeting with from me: but once more—who
are you? How came you here?"

"Many long years have I been a captive in
this convent," replied the white lady, "I
have discovered its secret passages; when our
enemies are buried in sleep, I sometimes profit
by that discovery."

She now began her tale; it was long, and
Julia found some difficulty in following it: too
much busied with her own misfortunes and her
own situation, she feared lest her mind had wan-
dered during the narration, and prevented her

comprehending all its details. All that she could make out was that the prisoner was a victim of monastic despotism; she had long been persecuted, and the error she reproached herself with the most, and which she regarded as the cause of all her woes, was her refusal to take the veil when offered to her. In those days, she said, the folly of love filled her bosom, the breath of ambition intoxicated her brain. She had fancied that the interest of her family, that powerful friends, would rescue her from a captivity she viewed with horror: she had indignantly rejected the garb of the order, which however might have rendered her imprisonment honourable and pleasant; but she had then to learn the extent of the lady abbess's power; she was not aware of the impossibility of escaping her tyranny. Owing to this imprudence, she now was a prisoner in this house, where otherwise she might have been treated as an equal, where her birth might perhaps one day have raised her to the highest dignities. She promised, in another visit, to narrate all she had suffered, the degree of humiliation and misery to which she had been reduced, the dangers which threatened her, and the hopes which still remained. She hinted also that she might be useful to Julia; for she knew the house and the characters both of the principals and

rns ; she had also intelligence beyond the
acts of the convent : she promised to fur-
nish Julia with the means of communicating
her friends, as soon as she had gained her
licence, so that they might take a mutual
interest in each other's interests. The only de-
mand she had to make was that the deepest
secrecy should veil her visits, that Julia should
not divulge them, either to sister Mary or
the lady abbess : she hoped the day was not
far when she might gain that friendship to
which she was entitled by the similarity of their
positions.

Julia listened attentively to the white lady :
she promised secrecy, and accepted the offer of
visits on the following evenings. Never-
theless she was far from feeling that confidence
which the stranger appeared so certain of gain-
ing. There was not in her words and the ex-
pression of her countenance, that harmony
which constitutes the unerring proof of sin-
cerity : the tone of her voice lacked firmness,
rather affecting an oily smoothness, which ex-
cited prejudices in the mind of Julia. But
she was alone ; though few hours had elapsed
since she entered the nunnery, she had al-
ready felt the bitter torture of solitary seclu-
sion, a seclusion which she had every reason to

believe was far from its end. The society of a human being now began to appear as one of the necessities of life, she therefore determined not to repel even the illusions of friendship and confidence.

The white lady withdrew a short time before the break of day, and promised to return the following night. Julia, whose slumbers had been so much interrupted, feeling the want of repose after her fatigues, and having no reason to hasten her rising, remained in her bed until a late hour : she had not, therefore, time to feel the length of the morning before sister Mary arrived. She had intended to ask the assistance of that nun to enable her to complete her drawings. She made the request and it was granted : Mary gave her also the necessary implements for embroidery. Julia had also intended to take advantage of the anxious curiosity evinced by the nun to excite some interest in her bosom ; she tried the experiment and it failed. When she began to give some account of her family, her rank, her former manner of living, she found sister Mary took no interest whatever in her narrative ; she was entirely ignorant of the world and of all the gradations of society ; she understood not the delights of refinement nor the pleasures of the mind. Julia afterwards

of the strange events and the fearful adventures which had lately surrounded her ; but his the nun expressed no astonishment. that existed beyond the walls of her convent he knew no more than the supernatural contained in her legend : nothing could her as improbable or impossible ; no event, ever marvellous, could at all equal the wonders she each day read of in the lives of the saints ; satiated with the miraculous, she had lost all appetite for what in the usual walks of the world would have excited astonishment. Mary's curiosity was consequently directed towards the worldly vices from which she thought she happily escaped—towards that voluptuous life, from which she thought herself sheltered by the rules she professed : she interrupted her recital of the most alarming adventures merely to introduce a question relative to courtship and gallantry ; Julia was at length so entirely disconcerted by her lewd insinuations, that she found it necessary to put an end to the conversation.

Her drawings, her needle-work, her reflections, her conjectures respecting the only two inmates she had an opportunity of seeing, enabled Julia to pass her time with comparative ease, and to divert the sorrowful thoughts ex-

cited by her situation : but that inward strength, that courage, with which she had borne up against her overwhelming misfortunes, were exhausted as soon as she was no longer cheered by the light of day. The weather was rainy and louring, the wind whistled around the lofty roof: she could now but confusedly distinguish the objects in her room; but all she saw spoke to her of sufferance and captivity; in the distance she could hear only inarticulate sounds, but they seemed to her the mournful wailings of wo. She was in the power of her own enemies and those of her father, closely confined in a vast edifice, where she well knew the most atrocious and cruel deeds had ere now been committed; she knew that victims, perhaps as innocent as herself, and certainly as powerfully protected, had perished in horrid dungeons. The white lady had but lately told her terrific tales of the living being inclosed in the same tomb with the dead, in order to constrain them to bow before the will of their spiritual superiors: she had told her of the punishments of hunger, cold, darkness, and never-ending solitude, inflicted by the order of the bishops on unfortunate wretches, who could not, any more than herself, be objects of suspicion to the clergy. She well knew that her father, hated and feared by the church, far

iving the power of defending his daughter to her danger: she knew that her father was like herself, a prisoner, perhaps subjected to equally cruel treatment. The violence of her persecutors, committed to gain possession of her person, furnished her with a dreadful proof of the cruelty to which her persecutors might dare to resort in their attempts; she doubted not that the death of Felix and herself would be sacrificed rather than Volusianus should be disappointed in reaping the fruits of his intrigues.

In the midst of these reflections the tale told of the white lady started before her recollection: she sought to unravel its details, the better to understand the whole, and to determine on what questions she should put to clear up her doubts; the more she thought of the narrative, the more the contradiction and obscurity did she discover. How came it that she had the range of the convent? How came it that she could enter the chamber of a prisoner whom they apparently wished to conceal from the eyes of the world? What advice, what assistance could the ranger expect from a new captive? What advice had she given in her turn? Did she not appear, by her pretended confidence, to wish to induce her to bind herself by vows? She now recalled to her mind the last warning given by

father Andrew, when he left her at the gate of the nunnery. In a convent, as in the world, he had said, it is better to confess than to confide.

Was not the white lady one of the creatures of the abbess? Was it not probable she wished to obtain her confidence but to betray? Under the names of sympathy and friendship, did she not seek to give counsels that might lead to destruction?

The suspicion of such perfidy chilled Julia with horror. She could not, however, bring herself to reject the only consolation now left to her. So sweet to the ear is the language of sympathy, so healing a balm is even the illusion of false friendship, so cruel, so maddening, is the torture of solitary imprisonment: moreover, sister Mary, whose society she was only permitted to enjoy during one quarter of an hour each day, had disgusted her by her gross and vulgar sentiments. She resolved, therefore, to continue to shew friendly respect towards the white lady, but in her company to place a guard on her words, and to avoid putting into the stranger's possession, arms which might afterwards be turned against herself. Having duly pondered over and fixed on this resolution, she began to await the white lady with almost as much impatience as if she expected deliverance

lands. Want of variety is of all human ills the most irksome, perhaps the most portable; and in a life entirely uniform, varied either by action, motion, or exercise is no event, of whatsoever nature, the soul does not soon learn to pant for, and consequently a relief.

Time passed several days, during which the sense of solitude was felt with increased severity, and the weight of inactivity became gradually more oppressive; the monotony of those long and melancholy hours was daily interrupted in a similar manner; at noon by the arrival of

Mary; always prattling though she said nothing, accompanied by a lay sister, who only appeared for an instant, but never opened her

eyes at midnight by the arrival of the white sister, who generally past two hours, seated on the edge of the bed.

The latter proceeded cautiously; she seemed aware of Julia's mistrust; but, nevertheless, she knew how to give a tone of interest to her conversation; her mind was sufficiently refined, her taste sufficiently correct, so as never to shock, like sister Mary, the feelings of delicacy. She often dwelt on her own imprudence in receiving the veil; she spoke of her admittance into the order, as the only probable term of her

sufferings: but she avoided all allusion to Julia's situation, and refrained from giving any counsel; she rendered her some slight services, in order to increase the comforts of her apartment. One night, unexpectedly, she informed the captive that she had found means of opening a correspondence beyond the bounds of the convent; she offered to convey a note, and furnished her with the means of writing. The look and the sound of voice with which this offer was accompanied, excited the suspicions of Julia: she availed herself, however, of the opportunity; but in what she wrote, observed the greatest circumspection: she penned two letters, one for her father, the other for Felix, both of whom she wished to quiet respecting her fate: but in writing to Felix, she apologised for the infringement of decorum to which she was reduced by the peculiarity of their respective situations.

To the second note the white lady brought an answer the following night. Julia immediately discovered it was not in the hand-writing of Felix, still less in his style. The writer, assuming his name, pretended that, moved by the grace of God, renouncing the world, ambition and love, he had by solemn vows dedicated himself to God in the monastery of St. Martin: he exhorted her also to do the same. Julia

letter, then, to the white lady, who constantly refused to divulge her name, she said, "this letter is a forgery."

Other, unmoved, replied, "I should not all surprised were it so: it is very difficult between two convents, to conceal a correspondence from the governors of both. Could either of them have seen your letter, it will have been a sufficient motive for attempting to impose upon you, particularly as the contents must have proved that you never before corresponded with Felix."

"They who attempt to deceive me," replied she, "labour in vain. My determination never to become a nun remains unshaken: that determination is unconnected with the fate of Felix. The abuse of power may compel me to pine away my days in captivity; but never will I willingly submit."

"Such noble courage I admire," said the white lady, embracing her; "I love to see worldly advantage thus sacrificed to religious faith: I see, my friend, I see the tenets and opinions of Julius Severus still direct you. Well—know a secret that long hath pressed on my heart—know we both belong to one and the same religion. We both profess the faith of ancient Rome: follow me to my

“chamber—there may we fall down and worship the gods we adore.”

As the stranger spoke, Julia raised herself on the bed, eyed her with a look that seemed to pierce her very soul. The white lady cast down her eyes, and her voice faltered as she finished the sentence.

“There does exist,” replied Julia, “a degree of treacherous meanness, which the noble heart can bring itself with difficulty to comprehend, or to believe possible; convincing evidence was required for me to know your character; that evidence I have obtained. Begone! Now that you are discovered, your services can no longer be of use to those who employ you. For my part, even the horrors of solitude would not be sufficient to reconcile me to the sight of your person.”

The white lady hung down her head, and withdrew without making a reply.

CHAP. XII.

THE HERMITAGE OF ST. SENOCH.

that year, the blessed Senoch, a priest, was withdrawn from the world—by birth he was a Taifali; he took refuge at Tours, and retired to a cell between two ancient streets.—

In the corner stood a small cell, formed of square stones, which a man could hardly stand erect. There he lived eight years and more, taking but little food, and spending his time in watching and praying. But afterwards, having received a violent fright, he began to cry out that he felt horrid tortures, so that aided, in my belief, by a part of the host of hell, he removed the square stones which he was inclosed, and threw them to the earth.”—
Tw. lib. v. c. 7. p. 227. et lib. viii. cap. 34. p. 329.

THE day following this nocturnal adventure, Maria was, at an early hour, awakened by sister Mary, who until then had never made her appearance before noon, but now entered the room where the captive had risen from her bed.

“The lady abbess wishes to see you,” said she, “make haste and dress yourself: I would advise you, at the same time, to pack up such articles as may be of use to you in the place

“to which you are to be removed; for I
“think you will never come back to this room
“again. I dare say poor sister Anna, in her
“latter days, bewailed not taking the same
“precaution, and I myself am sorry I did not
“advise her so to do.”

A cold thrill of horror ran through the veins of Julia; her colour fled: she sunk down, and Mary, seeing she had fainted, hastened to afford all the assistance in her power; she sprinkled water on her face, opened the windows, and at length succeeded in restoring her to life.

“Poor creature, how she trembles,” said Mary,
“how dismayed she appears: pluck up your
“spirits; I hope the evil is not so great as you
“imagine—I did not say her highness intended
“sending you to the *dimittis in pace*, did I?
“How could I have said so? I know nothing
“about the business; I am not come to tell
“lies. Nay, why should she send you there?
“To be sure I have seen others taken there
“who had done no more harm than you. Who
“knows but these pictures you have drawn may
“be the images of the false gods before whom
“you bow down and worship! But that’s no
“concern of mine; I never told any body
“about it: who can have seen them besides

ves? Do pray then be a little more

's words gave new food to the alarm of Severa. She now guessed that, in des- forcing her to take the veil, they would measure in establishing against her the ac- on of idolatry committed on holy ground, to bring about a sentence which, doubtless, be most cruel. Such, evidently, was the lady's aim when she invited her to join in worship of the pagan gods. Baffled in that project, offended and humbled, it was not ely she had grounded the same accusations ie drawings which had beguiled the weary s of Julia. With judges such as she had spect, would the shield of truth suffice to de- the captive?

he Roman spirit of Julia Severa, how- ; rose high above the dangers which sur- runded her, and enabled her to meet her fate n fortitude. Without replying to sister Mary, arose and dressed in haste. She then packed such garments of Sister Anna as she thought ght be of service; she regarded them as her eritance, thinking the day fast approaching en some other unfortunate female would ac- ure the same right over her own scanty ward- be. She forgot not the tablets, and as she

closed them she attentively eyed the point of the style; it seemed as if she called to her memory, at the moment, that this steel instrument, used to trace letters on plates of ivory, smeared with wax, had more than once served a Roman to escape at the same time from captivity and existence. When she had made up her bundle, she took it in her hand, and turning towards sister Mary, said, "I am ready."

Julia was conducted to the parlour, where she found the abbess waiting her arrival. She was in the company of two nuns, one of whom Julia knew to be the white lady who had visited her so often in the night; the other she had not before seen.

"Julia Severa," said the abbess, "our faithful counsellors have informed us that you evince an unholy aversion for our sacred order: we find that you refuse the favour we offered you of an admittance into this house, the retreat of beatitude: we hear that you obstinately persist in following the evil inclinations of your corrupt heart. Our duty is to neglect nought that may cause the light of life to shine on your eyes: especially as by the representative on earth of the Most High, and also of our lord St. Martin, it is resolved you shall never return to the world,

er quit the houses of God. But, on other hand, we feel it our bounden duty to guard lest one tainted sheep enter our whole flock. We owe it to our venerable sisters, to beware lest they hold communion with the ungodly; we shall, therefore, remove you to a spot where you may hear the word of God, and profit by holy example, without having the power of rendering, as doubtless you would wish to render, evil for good. In her unfathomable charity, sister Constantia hath undertaken to conduct you to a secure retreat, where e'en the air you shall breathe will penetrate you with the sanctitude of men who have long since suffered holy martyrdom, giving glory unto God. Go, my sisters, under your protection may the daughter of the idolater enter on the path to salvation."

"Whither do you intend to take me?" said Julia.

"It is not necessary you should know," replied the abbess.

"Were I to give my consent to a deed of such unjust violence," replied Julia, "I should think myself unworthy the name of Roman, unworthy to call myself the daughter of a senator: but equally unworthy would it be for

“ me to join in useless strife. I am in your
“ power: dispose of me as you list: the God
“ we both serve will avenge innocence op-
“ pressed.”

Sister Mary had brought the garb in which Julia entered the convent. In obedience to a sign from the abbess, she threw it over the shoulders of Julia, covering her face with the cowl. The two nuns now drew near, and without speaking took her by the arm and advanced towards the door. A convulsive tremor ran through Julia. She offered no resistance, but experienced a feeling of joy as soon as she crossed the sill of the convent gate: when she first breathed the open air she felt as though her deliverance was at hand. A close litter, borne by two vigorous mules, was waiting in the court, guarded by four domestics belonging to the nunnery. Julia entered first: she feared lest sister Constantia, who had been named as her companion, should be the same white lady whose treachery she could no longer doubt. With pleasure she saw that the person who next ascended the litter, and was to serve as her guide, was the other nun whom she knew not. Now placed in absolute dependence on that nun, she eagerly sought to unravel her disposition by her features; but she found it impos-

to come to any satisfactory conclusion of the physiognomy of the holy sister—a physiognomy which appeared fashioned to express not but humility and devotion, and from which nature seemed entirely excluded by affection.

The litter rapidly crossed the streets of the city; the vehicle being often used in the service of the convent, did not attract the attention of the inhabitants. Quitting the town they entered the Cher, and proceeded towards the north-east.

The two travellers had until now been silent; but as soon as they were in the country, sister Constantia commenced the task she had undertaken, which was to administer religious instruction, as to a new convert. She related to her, in one breath, all the principal mysteries, nearly in the same order in which the catechism explained them: she intermingled her discourse with scriptural quotations, which she offered to Julia as proofs. Julia began by assuring sister Constantia that she was already fully convinced of the truth of those principles she wished to instil: but seeing that her companion was unmoved by this declaration, she continued to listen with courtesy, and even sought, by putting various questions, to induce her instructress to

enter more deeply into subjects of which she seemed only to skim the surface. She soon perceived that sister Constantia could not quit the beaten track: she believed without reflection, without examination, all she had learnt by rote; in other respects her mind presented a mere mass of confusion and disorder. Instead, therefore, of giving her a useless toil, which, probably, might have mortified her vanity, Julia resolved to assist her in her lecture, to suggest that natural order of ideas from which she often wandered, to point out the conclusions she was incapable of deducing from the premises, to recall, successively, in their proper order, all the arguments which, doubtless, her companion wished to adopt, but had forgotten. This Julia did with so much modesty and deference, that the nun, although now much better grounded in her reasoning, much more correct in her conclusions than she usually was, did not so much as discover the assistance she received from her pupil, but rather attributed to divine grace the sudden clearness which illumined her mind.

Ultimately, however, we always gain some affection for those persons in whose company we find our powers of mind more perfectly developed. Sister Constantia, whose eyes when she ascended the litter were void of expression,

to look upon Julia with more complacency her self-satisfaction appeared to have birth to more kind feelings : she proposed to her to convert her prayers, and appeared surprised at the rapidity with which Julia comprehended what she already knew.

After more than three hours passed in these mutual exercises of piety, Julia thought she was now in her turn to speak of subjects which interested her own welfare. "Can you tell me whether you are conducting me?" said she to sister Constantia.

"I think now there can be no harm in informing you that we are going to the hermitage of the illustrious confessor, father Senoch. Three or four pious matrons, who for many years have taken care to provide the subsistence of that holy personage, have asked leave to form a small congregation connected with our house ; I am, therefore, going thither, by the order of the lady abbess, to instruct them in our rules."

Julia having never heard of father Senoch, would have been glad to know in what place his hermitage was situate ; but the knowledge of sister Constantia extended not so far ; in her idea there was no other geography than that of sanctuaries, and her memory retained with diffi-

culty the name of a town or river, near the dwelling of a saint. Julia would have wished to know whether she was to remain in that small congregation, or be removed still further; but the future depended not on sister Constantia. The superintendence of their present journey, and the execution of subsequent determinations, were to be regulated by a priest who now accompanied them, travelling on horseback behind the litter. This person Julia had not yet observed; but when he drew near to give some order to the drivers, his voice thrilled her with horror; that voice she thought she already had heard, and the recollection was attached to some scene of terror. After long attempts to connect her flitting impressions, she thought she could recollect the sound, as being the voice of the monk that appeared to her in the castle of Rutilianus, and whom she now began to consider as a living being and not a spectre.

Although absorbed in the contemplation of her own destiny, Julia was not insensible to the pleasure of once more seeing the country, and enjoying the fresh breeze, after pining many weeks in captivity, and being but just recovered from her morning fears of ending her existence in the most dreadful dungeon. Her companion appeared to her a person of narrow

mind and weak intellect, but who could inspire neither fear nor disgust. The countenance of the priest, whom she had an opportunity of seeing nearer, while the mules were resting and the two travellers were partaking of a slight repast, bespoke a mixture of religious ardour and natural timidity, which did not ill accord with the part she suspected him of acting in the castle of Rutilianus. It appeared he had intended to seize her in that place, as father Andrew had done two days after at Hesodunum: in obedience to the orders of Volusianus he had attempted it; but at the moment of execution his courage failed him, and as soon as he heard the mastiffs approach he fled. Julia had now learnt to view human nature in a more hateful light; the haughty severity of the abbess, the treachery of the white lady, the vulgarity of sister Mary, inspired her with more disgust than even that action of violence. The name of the priest was Venantius; she observed him, and remarking in his voice and look a certain degree of mildness, she wished to acquit him of every thing like wilful malevolence.

The autumn was already far spent; the forests they crossed had lost their leafy clothing; but although it was now the beginning of December, the sun shone brightly during their journey,

and its setting rays gilded the tower of Loches just as it presented itself to the eyes of the travellers. As soon as they could clearly distinguish it, Venantius approached the litter, and pointing to the summit of the spire, said, " behold the man of God ! Behold the ever-bless-
" ed father Senoch !" The nun and the priest, responding alternately, began to recite a prayer, recommending themselves to the intercession of the saint whose dwelling they now approached.

Julia fixed her eyes on the object pointed out by the priest ; but with difficulty could she distinguish what it was. A very lofty square tower stood before her, rising above a small hamlet and commanding the stream of a river. The first three stories were preserved whole and entire ; the second appeared even inhabited ; but above these three, one side of the walls arose to the height of two stories more, the other sides having fallen from decay. The standing wall formerly constituted the back of the tower : near the top was confined within the stones, the saint held out to her admiration. His head alone was visible, placed between two hewn blocks, beneath a sort of capital : there it was so closely confined that he could neither stretch it forth nor draw it back. At a small distance below was seen an opening in the wall, from which

his hands, one holding a small bell. The lower part of his body was closely walled up in the stone; and the space left around his frame was so narrow that he could neither lift his head to his face nor change his position for one moment.

A flight of stone steps, fastened to the solitary wall, led to the saint who was looked upon as a martyr. Some women, with a small basket, had ascended these steps, and were busied in feeding the saint, placing the morsels between his lips. The priest, who escorted sister Constantia and Julia, proposed, as soon as they descended from the litter, to go and receive benediction at his feet. Sister Constantia declared, with pious fervour, that of all her desires that was the most ardent, and that now she had seen the face of the man of God, she had already forgotten all the fatigues of her journey. Julia said she was prepared to follow; even the muleteers asked to be permitted to accompany them. To approach a saint, to worship him on the threshold, was to insure the blessings he would one day shower down on the heads of those who had honoured him ere he was received into heaven.

The travellers therefore first ascended the aircase in the inside of the tower, and then by

the uncovered flight of steps, reached a small platform under the saint. Venantius spoke first. "Ever-blessed Senoch," said he, "by the authority of the archbishop of Tours, I am come to communicate the sacred rules of St. Mary of the Casket, to the pious virgins who have congregated in this tower, and, animated by your example, have raised their hearts to the Lord."

"*I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh,*" replied Senoch: "*and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.*"

"Glory to God! Glory to God!" exclaimed the women; "how aptly has he answered!"

Julia in amazement turned her eyes around: the answer did not appear to her sufficiently pious to authorize such admiration. Venantius seemed aware of her thoughts. "This holy man," said he, "hath imposed on himself a law never to pronounce, from two hours before sun-rise until two hours after sun-set, any words excepting those contained in the gospel of the day. This is the first of December, and the church lesson is the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. He has answered me with the seventeenth verse."

turning towards Senoch, the priest pre-Constantia. "This pious sister," said he, been elected by the lady abbess of the convent of Tours, to superintend the new establishment, and direct its inmates in the fear of the Almighty: but her weighty task terrifies her; she longs for the illumination of your counsels."

And they said unto Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles," replied Senoch, quoting the seventh verse, "*men and brethren, what shall we do ?*"

She brings with her a young person, a daughter to an idolater and an ungodly Gaul, whom the apostolical Volusianus would wish to rescue from perdition, by means of your intercession."

'And with many other words did he testify," replied Senoch, from the fortieth verse, "*and exhort, saying, save yourselves from this ungodly generation."*

"Even our muleteers," continued the priest, are anxious at the end of their journey, to receive the benedictions of the glorious confessor. Before taking any rest, or tending their cattle, they are come unto you. Instead of yielding to bodily hunger and thirst, they have thirsted only for the word of life."

Senoch replied with the fifteenth verse: "*These are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.*"

"We shall, therefore, ever-blessed confessor, tarry in your dwelling, seeking to learn holiness from your example."

"Therefore," replied Senoch by the twenty-sixth verse, "*did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad: moreover, also, my flesh shall rest in hope.*"

The travellers now quitted the platform, and went down to the interior of the tower, conversing on the presence of mind with which Senoch, quoting only the words of the gospel of the day, had replied to the different questions put to him.

"This holy person has been known," said Venantius, "to suffer, without complaining, the pressure of a sharp stone, which had fallen between his back and the wall, because, in the gospel of the day, there was no passage by which he could make known the pain he felt, or the assistance he stood in need of."

All appeared equally to admire his patience, and that presence of mind, which they called prophetic inspiration: Julia was the only one who doubted within herself whether, by such whimsical constraints, the saint held forth to her

ation had not walled up his mind as well
body, so as to render them both equally
s to mankind.

the second story of the same tower was
e the narrow cell destined for Julia, which
was made to enter by the orders of sister
stantia. The tower was massy and spacious.
first story was occupied by the chapel and
rge hall, wherein the nuns passed the day
ther, the second was divided into eight very
ined cells. That inhabited by Julia was
ly filled by her little bed. Yet she felt a
asure in viewing the country from her small
dow; she thought change of dwelling had
tributed much to her comfort. She passed a
days in a sort of mental repose. She was no
nger condemned to solitary confinement, but
is daily called to attend, for several hours, the
ous exercises of the dowagers and virgins who
ad united to serve Senoch, and whom Con-
antia instructed in the rules of her convent;
ne also daily assisted at the lectures and exhor-
ations addressed by the priest Venantius to the
mall congregation. In those who surrounded
er, she saw nothing but zeal, sincere although
blind; she did not observe in them any marks
of hateful passion; and although she could learn
nothing in their society, although she found

nothing in them worthy to be admired or imitated, still she thought she had nothing to fear.

The inhabitants of the tower of Loches lived as it were separated from the whole world: although pilgrims came daily to visit Senoch, they had no communication with the nuns, still less with Julia. It seemed as if no tidings of what was passing in Gaul could ever reach this small convent, or excite the least curiosity among its inmates; time, however, hung not heavily. One evening father Venantius entered the room of Julia, pale, trembling, and shewing on his countenance marks of great alarm. "You must, my daughter, prepare instantly to depart," said he, "we are not here in security: the orders I have received forbid me losing one moment in rescuing you from the search of people who would again plunge you into the whirlpool of destruction."

"What then alarms you?" said Julia; "to what danger can I now be exposed?"

"To the danger of being conducted to Clovis, first by certain *bagaudæ*, who are come into the neighbourhood to seize you; secondly by a body of Franks, already arrived at Tours, threatening Volusianus with the effects of their anger."

The secret inclinations of Julia, watched as

had been by the white lady, by sister y, and, for the last few days, by the nuns, companions, had been communicated to antius. The priest, therefore, well knew could alarm the captive by announcing the coach of her deliverers, and thus induce to assist in the measures to which he was led to resort once more to conceal her.

"We have long since known," said he, "that the bagaudæ have been employed to gain possession of your person, by the agency of an idolatrous priestess, called Lamia, in whom your unhappy father places implicit faith, and who foretold your union with Clovis. The day following your departure from Tours, all the roads leading to that town were beset by their wandering bands. A few days afterwards Theodoric entered the city with his Frank soldiers, and the sanctuary of God was profaned by their pagan host. I thought we should have been here in safety, but last night a company of bagaudæ assembled at the foot of the tower: the blessed Senoch, who ever watches over us, removed them by pronouncing the maledictions of the church; perhaps you heard his bell; but I have just received advice that they are still lurking in the neighbourhood; to-night, therefore, will I

“convey you to a retreat known to myself
“alone, where neither they nor any one else
“shall dare to seek for you.”

Julia was completely in the power of the nuns and father Venantius; she, moreover, placed a certain degree of confidence in the latter; without delay or reluctance she therefore prepared for departure, and having passed the Indre, she ascended the litter, escorted by the priest on horseback.

CHAP. XIII.

THE CASTLE.

The soldier of Christ, Saint Lenogisilus, hearing that father of Saint Agnesida wished to give her in marriage, heedless of threats, took the holy virgin to his own cell, and there placed the veil on her, consecrating her to God. She wore it to the end of her days, valiantly serving the Lord, together with that man of God."—*Vita sancti Lenogisili Confessoris, cap. iii. p. 497. vol. iii.*

THE priest Venantius, not aware that the gaudæ had found the means of passing the river at Loches, thought he could not better provide for the security of his captive, than by placing both the Indre and the Cher between her and them: he took the proper measures to have a boat in readiness on the latter of those two streams. Before midnight he embarked with the daughter of Severus; and following the current of the Cher for nearly a quarter of an hour, they landed on the right bank, at the

door of a small chapel, situate near the foot of a lofty promontory, on the top of which Julia thought she could distinguish an ancient building. Father Venantius had the key of the chapel: it was empty, in a neglected state, and apparently had not for a long time been employed for divine service. Having lighted one of the wax tapers that stood on the altar, Venantius took the light in one hand, and with the other led Julia forwards: they passed by a small door behind the altar, of which the priest had also the key, and entered a subterraneous passage with many turnings. After walking some time in the cave, they found a long flight of steps, which they ascended with considerable fatigue. There were some openings intended to admit light; but although Julia drew near to them, in order to discover whither they were taking her, she could distinguish nothing. The moon had not yet risen, all was in darkness. Instead of ascending the last flight, which seemed to lead to the principal entrance, Venantius, followed by Julia, took a turning to the left, that brought them to a back staircase, at the top of which he opened, with the same keys, a room, into which he desired Julia to enter.

This room was small, but neat; it appeared once to have been elegantly furnished, but had

or a long time been inhabited: "There may repose," said Venantius to Julia, giving her a sort of couch. "Avail yourself the light of my taper to view the place in which you are to rest, to find what you may stand in need of, and to be convinced that there is no danger, for in a few minutes I shall be obliged to leave you in the dark: the taper must not be seen too long shining in the same place. Be not uneasy, but sleep; to-morrow I will obtain a better lodging for you." Having thus spoken, he placed the taper near the various articles contained in the room, as if anxious that Julia should not be alarmed when left in the dark; he then quitted the apartment, and locked the door.

In spite of the care Venantius had taken to tranquillize the imagination of Julia, she no longer found herself alone, without light, in a strange place, to which she had been introduced in so extraordinary a manner, than she felt her heart beat with violence. No sound was heard either above or below, in the vast building where she was a prisoner: she was, perhaps, the only living soul under the roof; for she thought Venantius must have again descended to the chapel, in order to make the proper arrangements with the ferrymen and

muleteers for her journey on the next morning. Not a beam of light penetrated her room, until the moon, now on its decline, arose: then she observed some crevices in the shutter which closed her window: she endeavoured to open it; but the bolts which fastened it were either rusty, or so contrived that she was unable to succeed; she looked through the openings of the shutter, which gave her only an indistinct view of exterior objects; yet she was struck at the resemblance the meadow she now saw before her, and the border of the surrounding wood, bore to those of the castle of Rutilianus. She knew not the name of the last river she had crossed, but when she reflected, it appeared probable it was the Cher; and however extraordinary it might seem that she should be brought back by her persecutors to the very castle where they had first attempted to seize her, yet as she persisted in believing that Venantius had made the attempt, although he would not acknowledge it, she had every reason to believe he knew the secret passages, and had the keys of the castle of Rutilianus. In order to confirm her conjecture, she once more peeped through the crevice, seeking some object she might recognize with certainty.

In the edge of the wood which girded the

of Rutilianus, was a spot she could not forgotten: it was that pointed out by Rad- as the place where the former master of castle had been murdered with all his chil- ; and where, each year, the spectres ap- ed to repeat the same bloody tragedy: she ht for the spot and soon discovered it. The larly twisted branches of the trees, the e trunks, which in her memory were at- ed to the horrid picture drawn by Radbode, n presented themselves to her view. On the of the ides of December had Radbode said, two hours after midnight, the ghosts never ed each year to appear. She consulted her nory: this very night was that of the ides of cember, and judging, by the rise of the moon, ould not be far from two hours after mid- ht. In the same castle, surrounded by nu- rous domestics and veteran soldiers, under e protection of the mistress of the house, her end, she had experienced a deadly terror at e mere recital of the spectre tale: she was now ice more in the same place, at night, at the ery hour when the phantoms might be expected appear: but alone, a captive, her existence en unknown to the inmates of the castle. ar, however, from turning her eyes from the ot, where every moment she expected to see

the spirits arise, she fixed them with anxious curiosity on the corner of the wood; her breath was suspended, her knees tottered, when suddenly her attention was attracted by a noise close to her person. The footsteps of several people were heard, walking in an apartment, seemingly separated from her own by a mere partition of wood; she listened attentively: a female spoke: although her voice was rough and masculine, it was not that of Radbode.

"You are in the right," said the female, "you are in your own mansion; but recollect you are still in my power. Your life shall still answer for that of Procer; and if you make the slightest attempt to regain your liberty before he is restored, by the heavens I swear my threat shall be executed: your corse shall be left here severed into four quarters—but I have better hopes both for yourself and for me; one of my people informs me that your soldier quitted Bourges yesterday morning with my husband; and if your friends act fairly he will soon be here."

"I confidently expect his arrival," replied a voice, the sound of which thrilled the heart of Julia—it was that of Felix. In her astonishment it was with difficulty she could resist the desire of calling to him and of pronouncing his

; but the words she had just heard made n to her that he was a prisoner, exposed to anger, the extent of which she could not ; but which one single word might, per-, render fatal: she refrained; she resolved wait, and again to listen; but the blood, h a few moments before had fled from her ks now rushed back; and a vivifying warmth eeded to the death-like chill which just be- had spread over her frame. The danger not removed, the future was still concealed n her; but she had resumed all the hopes of th—the voice of Felix was to her the height felicity.

“And what do you intend doing with the priest you have just seized?” said Felix.

“Were I to do as I ought, I should soon hinder him from divulging our secret; but Armentaria is not cruel; she never sheds blood without necessity. Let Procer once be restored, and I will accept the ransom offered by this man and take him back to Loches. There is no great fear he will betray us, for when he met us down yonder, he was in such a terrible fright, that I am sure he will never again, in all his days, think of ascending the steps of the Cher.”

“This is the fourth day,” replied Felix, “that

“ you have compelled me to lead the life of a
“ bagauda; but now I am again under a roof
“ and have a bed at my command, I wish to be
“ left alone, that I may enjoy a little repose.”

“ To that I have no objection,” replied Armentaria; “ for we can expect no news before
“ the morning.” These words were followed by the noise of a closing door, driven bolts, and retiring footsteps. Felix, a prisoner, was now alone: he was by the side of Julia, separated from her by a slight partition. Julia’s heart throbbed with violence: she listened again, the better to ascertain whether he was alone, then, with a timid voice she exclaimed—“ Felix !”

Where find terms to describe the effects of that well-known voice—that voice which Felix could not mistake, which struck his ears amid the darkness of night, when in captivity, far from all places where he might hope to meet his Julia: when, foiled in his unfortunate combat with the bagaudæ, he was tortured by the thought that she was still sighing in the bottom of some dungeon, in the cavern of some convent! A thousand confused and contradictory thoughts rushed before his mind. She herself it was—restored to liberty; she herself it was, perhaps, calling for his assistance from the bottom of her cell—no, it was not she, it was her

to come to announce her death and cry for vengeance ! The exclamation " Julia, my dear Julia !" he repeated now in the voice of frenzy, then with the accent of agonizing terror, but so great was their eagerness, so great their agitation, that several moments elapsed before the two lovers could mutually hear and decide in what place they were, what obstacles separated them, what dangers still overhung them. The conversation which now took place through the partition was not interrupted. When Venantius, surprised by the bagaudæ as he quitted the chapel, was bound and cautiously guarded in the vaults. Armentaria having placed her couch in the neighbouring forests, and on the banks of the Cher, fixed her quarters in the hall on the ground floor, where she lay on a mantle, surrounded by the women and children of her household. Several hours were wanting to day-break, but to Felix and Julia they appeared not long. In a situation yet more perilous, in greater doubts respecting futurity, they had side-by-side descended the Loire two months before, yet had they, during their solitude, often retraced, with gentle emotions, the recollection of that dreadful night. At the present moment they were more completely separated ; but, on the other hand, they were unobserved. The infor-

mation they received from each other, the narrative they respectively told each other, gave them reason to believe their dangers were ended. Julia learnt from Felix that Clovis was on the point of espousing Clotilda; that Severus, despairing of bringing about his projected alliance with the barbarian king, had given his consent to his daughter's marriage; and that it was to effect her deliverance he had induced the Franks to march to Tours; that the barbarians had not entered that city in the design with which the priest had alarmed her; she learnt that when Felix departed in search of her, he had obtained the certainty of receiving her hand from her father, should he succeed; that the misfortune of falling into the power of the bagaudæ had to him been an object of sorrow, inasmuch only as thereby he had been prevented continuing his research; and that, as they had been the cause of his finding his long-lost friend, he should congratulate himself on having been captured by them. But when he pronounced these last words, the recollection of father Andrew, who had fallen in the contest, started before his mind; with tears of sorrow the two captives bewailed the death of the virtuous priest in whose imprudent zeal and blind obedience had originated all their woes.

"This captivity," said Felix, "cannot last much longer; it would not be worth while attempt to regain liberty by our own strength; since, if I may judge by the information given to Armentaria, her husband is liberated from the gaol of Bourges, and our exchange will take place in the morning."

He was not mistaken: hardly had the first rays of the rising sun gilded the tops of the neighbouring hills, when a shout of joy rung through the wide passages and halls of the castle Rutilianus. Radbode, who during this terrific night, had more than once heard strange noises in the upper part of the mansion, and whom the evil spirits had never before threatened so loudly, now, cheered by the dawn of day, and armed with her battleaxe, rushed from her lodge near the principal gate, and hurried to the meadow before the castle. There she met Diocles and Procer Nunnianus approaching together; in the mean time the bagaudæ who had been scattered for observation in the wood, locked around their chieftain, pressing his hand and greeting him with cries of joy; the windows of the castle flew open; Armentaria and her companions hailed her husband's return with loud acclaim, mingled with sobbings of

delight; she then hastened down, and rushed to his arms.

Radbode, in amazement, looked around, turning now towards the wood, now towards the castle, then towards Diocles, astounded at the sight of such a crowd, where she thought all was solitary. "You shall soon see some more guests," said Diocles smiling, "I hear from these good people, that our master Felix Florentius passed the night in this castle without your knowing any thing of the matter; the lady Sylvia Numantia and Julius Severus are about a quarter of a mile in the rear: they wont come up until we have settled the exchange of this captain with Felix: they were afraid to shew themselves before, lest your guests, seeing them approach, might retreat with as little noise as they advanced."

The slaves Felix had despatched from the camp of the bagaudæ to Tours, just after his capture, had induced not only Sylvia Numantia but Julius Severus also, to come and meet Felix at the castle of Rutilianus. Felix was now the only person on whom Severus could rely for the recovery of his daughter. No negotiation, no promise, no threat, had been able to make Volusianus throw any light on Julia's fate. No

mation had been received either among the bitants of Tours, or from the secret agents, directed by Lamia, scoured the neighbour-country. Dumnorix, the foster-brother of a, disheartened by so many unavailing efforts, and in sorrow, each day commencing vain attempts, uncheered even by hope.

The forces Severus had called to his assistance now began to desert him. The Franks Eudoric had led to Tours found the hospitality of the monks preferable to that of Severus; the wines of the Loire increased their veneration for St. Martin; they spent their time between the dining-hall of the convent and the cathedral, where they daily came to gaze on the ceremonial pageantry of the church; they devoutly listened to exhortations pronounced in a language of which they understood not a word. Theodorix at length told Severus that he thought it prudent to depart for Soissons with his companions in arms, for he could not answer, should Volusianus request the Franks to arrest Severus himself, whether they would not eagerly perform that service for him whom they called the head prelate of the Latins.

With a heart bruised by grief, his ambitious hopes completely blasted, torn by anxiety respecting the fate of his daughter, Julius Severus

therefore accompanied Sylvia to the castle of Rutilianus, in order the sooner to have an interview with Felix, and hear, from his own lips, the information he might have received from the priest Andrew, of whose death he had already heard. He followed on horseback the litter in which Sylvia travelled with Eudoxus, and a bagauda having been despatched to inform them they might advance, they reached the meadow just as the sun's disk began to appear above the horizon. At the same moment, Felix and Julia, (arm-in-arm,) came out by the castle gate; Diocles and Procer, Radbode and Armentaria stood around them; the plain was covered with bagaudæ; the federates also crossed the ravine, and flocked from the neighbouring field.

We shall not attempt to describe the joy of Severus, finding, in so unexpected a manner, his beloved daughter; that of Sylvia, pressing her son to her bosom; that of the two lovers, who now first tasted of unmingled bliss; of Procer and Armentaria, that couple, one of whom had so recently escaped the scaffold; that of Diocles, of Radbode, of all the domestics. A common feeling of gladness seemed to animate the various groups, which now stood separate, then again united. In order that no one under the roof of the castle of Rutilianus might be a stran-

o their joy, Julia requested of Armentaria favour of restoring to liberty the priest Veius, whom she held captive. This favour nobly requited by the offer Felix made to her, to Armentaria, and their little band. promised he would receive them on his vast estates, that he would give them houses and land, and enable them, under the condition of their paying a small service, to resume those agricultural labours for which they were born, and from which oppressive violence alone had deprived them.

The nuptials of Felix and Julia took place two days after at Noviliacum. There they passed their lives in retirement, far removed from the political convulsions which shook their unhappy country. Sylvia never quitted them. The affection of her son and daughter rendered her latter days more serene and happy than had been the spring of life. Fifteen years afterwards Felix became a subject of the king of the Franks, but without experiencing the calamities of warfare. Clovis and his army passed the Loire at Tours in the year five hundred and seven; he fought and conquered the Visigoths in the plains of Vouglé; but Noviliacum, situate to the left of his march, remained untouched, unravaged by his soldiers.

Julius Severus, as soon as Clovis was united to Clotilda, a ceremony which took place a few weeks after the marriage of his own daughter, returned to the Frank court. The king received him with respect, regarding him as the head of a party still powerful among the Romans, that of the pagans, which the conqueror did not wish to alienate: he confirmed him in the government of the earldom of Chartres. After Clovis's death, Severus attached himself to his eldest son, Thierry, who, not being born of Clotilda, or from a marriage acknowledged by the priests, had not the same respect for the church as his brothers.

Volusianus remained four years longer in the possession of the archbishoprick of Tours. The conversion of Clovis, so ardently desired by the prelate, and to which he had so much contributed, was the cause of his downfall. His intrigues with the king of the Franks, in order to bring him to the south of the Loire, after the battle of Tolbiac, in four hundred and ninety-six, excited at length the alarm of the king of the Visigoths. Alaric the Second ordered him to be seized at Tours and brought to Toulouse, his capital, where he was kept under close watch. New proofs of his treachery being discovered, the Visigoths carried him to a spot called Pe-

ly, in the earldom of Foix, where, on the ninth of the calends of February, he was beheaded, as guilty of high treason. His ashes were collected by the orthodox, and deposited in the Basilica of St. Nasaire, at Foix, which afterwards bore the name of the Basilica of St. Julian. During the religious wars they were destroyed by the Calvinists; but the feast of the glorious martyr has always been celebrated at Foix, on the eighteenth of January, and probably is kept to this day.

The priest Martin never made his appearance at Noviliacum: he had been rewarded with a rich stall, which enabled him to forget some scruples of conscience, he could not help feeling: first, respecting the secrets of his patron, which he had divulged to his ecclesiastical superior. Dumnorix, the foster-brother of Julia, remained together with Sangiban, in her service, tending the flocks in the wilds of Sologne.

Eudoxus passed a happy old age, and died at Noviliacum by the side of Sylvia and Felix, whose adventures, he said, imposed on him the duty of writing an important work on the etymology of the term *bagauda*: but he never completed his undertaking, at least his manuscript has not been handed down to us; so that we are in doubt whether he derived the word from the

Latin *bacchari* (to revel, to riot), or from the Celtic *bagad*, (a tumult.)

We have unsuccessfully sought for information respecting the fate of Diocles, of Radbode, and father Venantius; should we happen hereafter to receive any, we shall consider it our duty to communicate it to our readers.

THE END.











